

Cranfield University

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Employers' attraction and retention of older workers: A
Systematic Review

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Review

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ABSTRACT

The ageing of the population and the workforce has become a global phenomenon that has created concern about labour as well as skills shortages. Therefore the continuation of older workers in paid employment is regarded as beneficial to both the economy and to the older worker.

The aim of this dissertation is to make an enquiry about what employers are doing to make themselves attractive to these older workers and how they are retaining the older workers already present in their organisations.

The methodology has been to construct a review protocol through the formation of a review panel as well as the development of a detailed search strategy that included a transparent inclusion and exclusion criteria. The measurement for evaluating the quality of studies used in this systematic review is presented along with the strategy adopted to extract the data and synthesise the findings.

The search results were quite limited due to the limited number of research studies conducted particularly for the first of the two research questions relating to the attraction of older workers into the organisation. However the studies that have been conducted thus far shows a level of connection between the methods that can be used to attract older workers and those identified as being used to retain older workers. Finally, gaps from the systematic review process are identified and further research areas suggested.

Keywords:
Older Worker, Recruitment Attraction, Retention

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1 Introduction

1.1 Overview

There are a number of reasons why employers need to focus on the issue of older people at work. Failure to take account of this could have a substantial impact on the organisation. Firstly, the working population is getting older which means that there will be fewer young workers available to recruit and manage in the future. The effect of this is that as the population ages, the numbers in the oldest age bands will increase the fastest (Armstrong-Strassen, 2008). The consequence is that organisations should acknowledge the importance of employing older workers whose life expectancy is increasing and of using their skills and expertise wisely. However, the latest statistics from Age UK (2010) identified that 40% of over 50's had been unemployed for over a year and this figure has risen by 52% more recently making it the highest percentage increase among all age groups and the highest level seen since 1997. There are also laws in place (for example; the Employment Equality (Age) Regulation 2006, within the United Kingdom) to sanction organisations that discriminate against individuals based on their age.

Furthermore there are skills and labour shortages occurring, which is a real and pressing managerial problem, despite the fact that there are millions of people unemployed (Thomas, 2010). A survey of 209 companies conducted by the Alliance of Sector Skills Councils identified that almost one-third (31%) of companies said that it was not possible to recruit people with the required skill set. In addition, Cappelli (2005) argues that many human resource departments rely solely on recruiting to respond to an overall shortage of workers when retention management could be used.

A large amount of recent discourse has also focused on the idea that older workers are an underutilised economic resource, one that could be used to ease both the economic and fiscal effects of an ageing population. For example, the additional payroll taxes paid by older workers could help alleviate financial pressures on the Social Security

systems (Diamond and Orszag, 2002), and the retention of older workers in the labour force could perhaps take pressure off the anticipated labour shortages.

In addition to potential macroeconomic benefits, there could be microeconomic benefits accruing to older workers themselves as many apparently wish to maintain productive activity during retirement (Roper, 2002). The business benefits of a diverse workforce in general are widely recognised. For example, Naegele and Walker (2006, p.8) identified the following benefits that organisations report from the recruitment of older applicants:

- Older applicants are often more skilled and match the organisations needs better;
- the general skills level of the workforce can be raised by recruiting older workers;
- older recruits pass on their experience to younger colleagues and the linking of new and existing skills can raise the organisation's productivity and capacity for innovation;
- recruiting older applicants can improve the corporate image of the organisation – both internally and externally – and so improve its corporate identity;
- recruiting older applicants can solve the problems of poor labour supply.

One hundred empirical studies of older employees' occupational performance capabilities found that there was no significant difference between the work performance of younger and older employees – if one used the yardstick of the bottom line or work completed (Morschhauser, Ochs and Hauber, 2003). More telling is the fact that these studies draw attention to the individual differences between contemporaries being larger than those found between different age groups. Therefore the real benefits to the recruitment and retention of older workers can be realised by savvy employers who appreciate that in order to have a broad spectrum of experience, skills and knowledge in the workplace, it is important to engage workers with different characteristics from the rest of their employees. This includes taking advantage of the wealth of resources that older workers offer to an organisation.

Even though most of the literature tends to focus on selection and retention, there is a great deal that could be learnt by looking at attraction. Therefore it is assumed that there is a lack of older workers mainly because of attraction problems; in other words, the organisation is not providing what the older worker wants (which includes but is not limited to flexible working, as evidence suggests in later sections).

Due to the reasons above which outline the demographic changes, employment law, skills and labour shortages as well as the intangible benefits of having an older workforce, there seems to be a case for conducting a systematic review of the literature to discover more about the attraction of older workers into the organisation but it is also equally important for organisations to work on retaining the talent that they have already recruited. For this purpose, the main focus of this paper will be: older workers, attraction and retention.

Aim of the review

The aim of the review is to enquire into the ways in which employers can attract and retain older workers. The review has been conducted using the systematic review approach (Tranfield, Denyer, and Smart, 2003) starting with a scoping study to provide an overview of the literature, and followed by the methodology to ensure that essential resources are not missed during the review. Therefore this research will provide an understanding of the existing knowledge on older workers so that gaps in the literature can be identified for future research.

Structure of the review

This review is structured as follows:

Chapter 2: The scoping study which initially positions the research within the literature areas of older workers, recruitment and workplace diversity. The area of workplace diversity then develops into retention in order to provide a more comprehensive view of the employment of older

workers. Research questions emerging from the scoping study will be addressed within the systematic literature review.

- Chapter 3: The methodological approach is used to conduct the systematic review and provide transparency of the decisions made during the review process.
- Chapter 4: The descriptive statistical results are presented from the application of the process outlined in Chapter 3.
- Chapter 5: The thematic findings resulting from the data extraction and analysis are synthesised.
- Chapter 6: The findings are discussed and summarised. This concludes the dissertation and provides direction for future research.

2 Scoping Study: positioning the review

2.1 Introduction

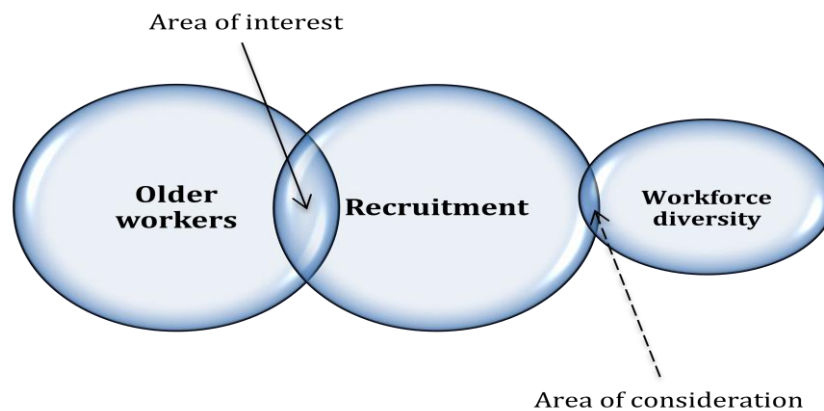
The purpose of this chapter is to identify the relevant literature situated at the intersection of three different areas of knowledge that are pertinent for arriving at the systematic review questions – those of older workers, attraction and workforce diversity (later amended to the literature on retention). This chapter, therefore, concludes with the positioning of the enquiry within the domains of literature identified, following the scoping process.

2.1.1 Mapping the field

The ‘scoping’ study comprises a type of literature review, yet until recently much less emphasis has been placed on the scoping study as a technique to ‘map’ relevant literature in the field of interest (Arksey and O’Malley, 2005). Mapping the field of study allows for greater focus and identification of the core areas that will allow the researcher to be specific about the research objective. According to Mays, Roberts and Popay (2001, p.194), scoping studies “aim to map rapidly the key concepts underpinning a research area and the main sources and types of evidence available”.

The systematic review will be used to examine three areas of literature: recruitment (attraction), older workers and workforce diversity as shown in Figure 2-1. For the avoidance of doubt, only the recruitment literature based on the ‘attraction’ of older workers would be relevant in answering the review question (RQ). The recruitment literature could also reveal process issues that are to be excluded from the systematic review so these will be made transparent in the selection criteria section of the protocol.

Figure 2-1 Original Mapping the Field Diagram



2.2 Older workers

In order to move through the literature on ‘older workers’, it is firstly essential to provide a definition of the age at which one is believed to fall into such a category, followed by the literature on attitudes towards older workers; attraction and retention of older workers; and policies and practices.

2.2.1 Definition of older workers

There is widespread variation in how “older workers” are defined in the literature with who should and who should not be defined as an older worker remaining elusive. Subsequently this inconsistency in the definition of an older worker makes it difficult to compare and contrast research findings. Equally important, the threshold for becoming an older worker is not consistently demarcated. In earlier decades, mid-career workers seemed to become an older worker once they started to plan for retirement. The status of being an older worker signalled the end of a career (Pitt-Catsouphe and Smyer, 2006). This lack of consensus has led to the age of older workers to be calibrated in different ways. Rocco, Stein and Lee (2003) argue that the age at which one becomes an older worker seems more related to the concerns faced by workers at various points in their life span than on biological age.

In the United States, the 1967 Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) was introduced to protect workers who are 40 years old and over. However, some think that 40 years of age is too young to be considered as an older worker (MetLife, 2005). For the purpose of this scoping study the term ‘older worker’ will be used with reference to people aged 50 years old and over as defined by researchers such as Loretto and White (2006). This is consistent with the definition used by The Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (2006) who also categorise older workers to be about 50 years of age or over. There is also the argument that labelling workers above a certain age as ‘older’ leads to stigmatisation, negative stereotyping and prejudices (Claes and Heymans, 2008).

2.2.2 Attitudes towards older workers

The research on older workers, such as that of Arnone (2006) argues that regardless of the demographics, employers need to assess the contributions that older workers make. This is consistent with the human capital framework that considers people as “differential investment, not an undifferentiated expense” (Arnone, 2006, p.10). According to Aronstein (2008), older workers possess an array of institutional knowledge and work experience and “are viewed by Human Resource Managers as being more reliable and having stronger work ethics than their younger cohorts” (Aronstein, 2008, p.25). In a study by Parry and Tyson (2008) which looked at online recruitment methods, they identified that there was a perception that online recruitment was appropriate for knowledge workers and middle management but less so for older workers and ‘housewives’ as they were not felt to be typical users of the internet. However this point of view was also refuted in their study.

Considering the significant demographic changes facing the composition of international labour markets, organisations need to re-evaluate how they can best utilise these older workers. Galenson (2004) found the idea that older workers are uncreative and inflexible to be a myth and has suggested that creativity comes in two forms: conceptual innovation (mould breaking new ideas) and experimental innovation (new ideas that are extensions of current practice). The former derives from perspectives unrestricted by the usual ways

of doing things and the latter derives from a lifetime of observation and learning. Galenson believes that older workers are better at experimental innovation and argues that organisations require both. Campanelli (1990) found that older workers were not less adaptable and that they frequently possessed rare and complex intellectual capital. In addition older workers were found to provide longer and more reliable service than their younger and often more expensive colleagues. The problem is that in spite of these advantages, older workers encounter an increasing number of barriers in employment.

Caro and Morris (1993) argued that older people are more likely than younger ones to be made redundant and less likely to be re-employed due to ageism. Butler (1969) first used the term 'ageism' to describe prejudice and discrimination concerning older people. Ageism is also considered by Butler to be the third 'ism' of our society (after racism and sexism). Research has shown that ageism is common in today's society (Palmore, 2001) and according to Banaji (1999) it is even more prevalent than sexism and racism but is more difficult to detect. This age bias in Western cultures where youth is glorified is opposed to the way that elders in the Chinese culture are highly respected and obeyed (Ho, 1996). Hence in the Chinese culture there seems to be a positive link between age and the perception of high quality personal resources as traditionally young people are not regarded as experienced, dependable or as having the capability of performing well in business (Fang, 1999).

2.2.3 Attraction and retention of older workers

As the statistics at the beginning of this scoping study have shown, there are greater numbers of older people living longer which has led to older workers extending their working life either by delaying retirement or by working during retirement. In one of the limited number of studies that examined the factors, which most attracted older workers, Rau and Adams (2005) found that work arrangements, such as part-time work and flexible hours are what older workers consider most important. Recently the practice known as 'bridge employment' has emerged according to Casey (2010), which involves the older worker negotiating part-time employment as a bridge to reaching retirement. The norm for this type of employment includes roles such as Wal-Mart greeters but as

Casey points out bridge employment is increasingly becoming common for professionals as well. These methods will further assist organisations in the quest to attract older workers.

Another successful strategy to attract older workers according to Hart (2009) is that of boomerang recruitment which was developed “to identify top-performing former employees who are purposely targeted and brought back” (Sullivan, 2006, p.66). This allows the organisation to reach out to the best and brightest former employees.

In terms of retention, many factors have been found to encourage older workers to both stay and to return to work, such as extended health care benefits (Koc-Menard, 2009). However, according to Pitt-Catsouphes and Smyer (2005), workplace flexibility is one of the most critical factors as they found that although many older workers planned to extend their working life, the majority wanted to move away from full-time employment. Flynn (2010) argues that the amount of hours of working is not the only factor to think about when creating jobs to assist older workers in balancing the responsibilities of home and work. The reason for this is that there are ‘enthusiasts’ who have a large amount of autonomy over their work and can choose which responsibilities to keep and which to pass on. Conversely there are the ‘detached’ that are trapped in non-stimulating, low paid jobs since they require part-time hours. Koc-Menard noted that the relationship between organisations and their older workers traditionally ended on the day of retirement.

However, an increasing number of organisations are now remaining in contact with retired staff as a strategy to encourage the growth of corporate alumni networks. Therefore, by virtue of keeping in contact with retired workers, the organisation can ascertain who wants to return to work and thus create a pool of experienced candidates. If these older workers are to extend their working lives, there need to be policies in place, which support them in returning to work. As Flynn (2010) argues, there is no ‘one size fits all’ approach to the extension of working life which could be advantageous to decision makers when introducing new employment policies.

2.2.4 Policies and practices

In the UK, policy has focused on increasing labour market participation either by encouraging those unemployed or inactive back into jobs or by urging those in employment to delay retiring (Vickerstaff, 2006). The Lisbon Strategy aimed to make Europe “the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion” (Lisbon European Council, 2000). Under this pressure, employment policies that once promoted early retirement from the workforce are now encouraging older workers to continue working for longer (Jepsen, Foden and Hutsebaut, 2002). For example, in the UK the introduction of working tax credits has meant that those over 50s working a minimum of 16 hours per week were encouraged to come off incapacity benefit and go back into work.

Since there is obviously no one size fits all, this incentive may not induce those higher income workers. According to Flynn (2010), other incentives such as lifelong learning programmes could entice those who are happy to move between occupations and industries. This reflects the point that the diversity amongst older workers calls for a selection of policy vehicles for the encouragement of extending their working life.

Train to Gain was introduced in April 2006 and represents an important strand of policy, according to Newton (2009), as this service aims to address the needs of employers by providing a link between business productivity and training. The UK government promoted greater training uptake by providing subsidies, which was important in order to try to reach the goal of increasing the participation rates of older workers. Previous research by the Institute of Employment Studies indicated that older workers made their own barriers to training as a result of fear or over confidence. Therefore the suggestion was for employers to convince older workers of the advantage of training as it seemed more plausible for the goals to be achieved if there was a desire on the part of the older workers to work longer; for this to occur it was also suggested that there needed to be a specific demand and practice from employers.

2.3 Recruitment

This section will begin by offering a definition of recruitment in terms of the attraction part that is relevant to this scoping study, followed by a model that will be adopted for moving through the recruitment process that will be assessed in greater detail to increase the understanding of how it can be applied to older workers.

2.3.1 Definition of recruitment

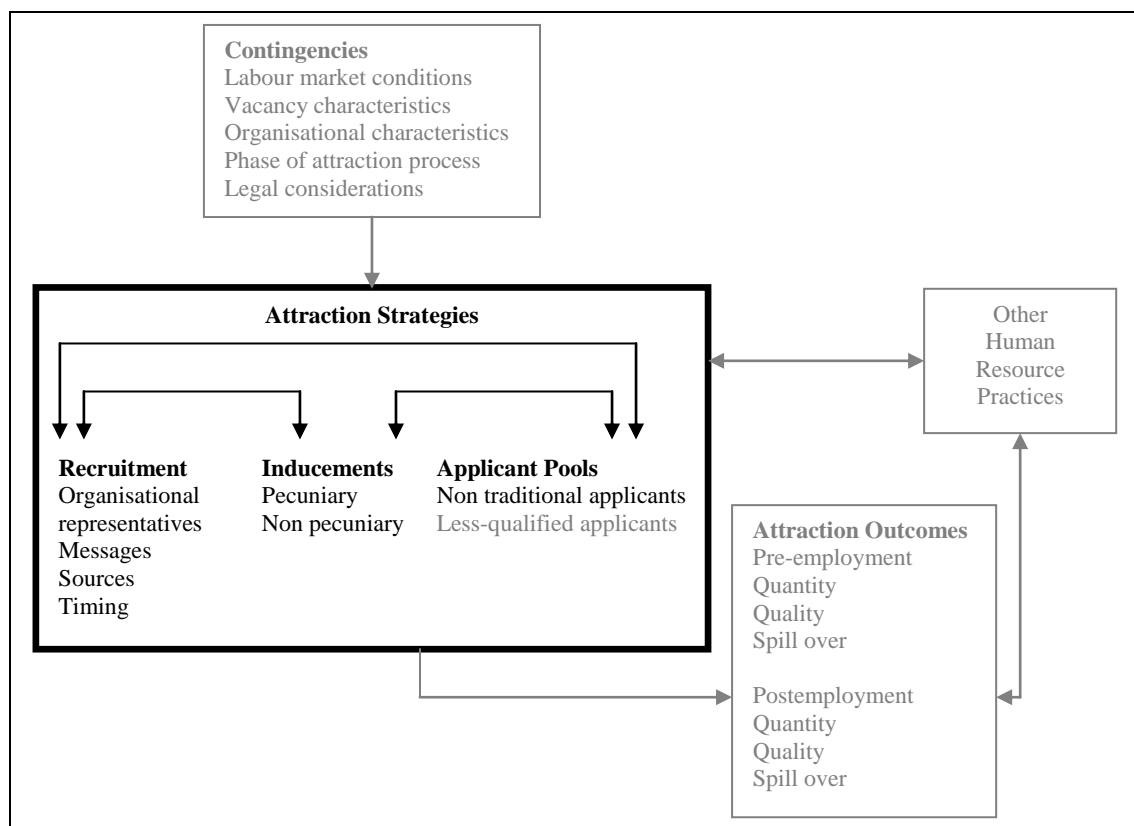
Many meanings of the word 'recruitment' exist including Rynes' (1991, p.429) definition of recruitment as "encompassing all organisational practices and decisions that affect either the number, or types, of individuals who are willing to apply for, or to accept, a given vacancy". Breaugh (1992, p.4) stated that "employee recruitment involves those organisational activities that (1) influence the number and/or types of applicants who apply for a position and/or (2) affect whether a job offer is accepted". In a seminal book by Barber (1998, p.5) an alternative definition of recruitment was offered which involves "those practices and activities carried on by the organisation with the primary purpose of identifying and attracting potential employees".

According to Barber (1998), recruitment is the organisation's side of a 'matching' process that involves those firms with jobs and the individuals seeking jobs. The interest of this paper is to focus on recruitment in terms of attraction as distinct from that of selection, which is beyond the scope of this piece of research. This is because selection deals with the part of recruitment that follows the initial attraction. The interest here is on attraction to increase applications to organisations. The distinction is that recruitment attraction is aimed at attracting individuals to an organisation, where conversely, selection is aimed at distinguishing the most qualified among those individuals attracted.

Rynes and Barber (1990) identified three distinct strategies for attracting applicants under any given set of market conditions which involved: (a) improving recruitment practices, (b) modifying employment inducements and (c) targeting non traditional applicants. Figure 2-2 shows how the attraction strategies both influence and are influenced by a

number of factors. Since the focus of this paper is on recruitment (although it is recognised that attraction strategies cannot be operationalised without simultaneous or subsequent changes elsewhere), the attraction section will be looked at in greater detail as part of this scoping study, while the other areas of the model will not be considered. This model of the attraction process serves to show the scope of the study in terms of linking recruitment with older workers who arguably form part of the non-traditional applicant pool.

Figure 2-2 Model of the attraction process (Rynes and Barber, 1990, p.289)



2.3.2 Organisational representatives

Characteristics possessed by the organisational representatives (e.g. Human Resources and Departmental representatives) such as personality and credibility, have been hypothesised to affect applicants' impressions and decisions about organisations. However, most studies have concentrated on campus recruiters so generalisability is questionable to applicants other than graduating students (Rynes and Barber, 1990).

2.3.3 Messages

The nature of the message transmitted to prospective employees may affect their attraction to the organisation. Some research has demonstrated that the content of recruitment messages, especially the provision of detailed information, may positively affect individuals' intention to apply. For example, the result of studies by Rynes and Miller (1983) and Barber and Roehling (1993) found that when there was specific information regarding the characteristics of the job this influenced the applicants' perceptions of the organisation's attractiveness. Under the realm of recruitment messages there are other areas of the literature that discuss these 'messages' being conveyed through different means, which will now be considered. While there are not specific references to 'older workers' in the literature, it can be argued that messages could produce a favourable outcome (attracting older workers) in a similar way that women and minority groups have been found to react positively.

The ways in which organisations can convey these messages include: employer branding; employer value proposition; and organisation identity and image. These themes are discussed in turn below.

2.3.3.1 Employer Branding

The marketing subject areas associated with brand management and branding have progressively been applied to human resource management (HRM) and the talent management community to attract, employ and retain competent candidates and employees in much the same way as could be seen within marketing where tools are applied to attract and retain customers, clients and consumers. One such way is by having an 'employer brand' as Ambler and Barrow (1996) argue.

Ambler and Barrow propose that having a marketing strategy is very relevant to HRM as it could improve the outcomes of recruitment. They define employer brand as "the package of functional, economic and psychological benefits provided by employment, and identified with the employing company" (Ambler and Barrow, 1996, p.187). As the

focus of the paper is on attraction, it is important to discuss a possible vehicle that could positively impact on recruitment outcomes (as shown in Figure 2-2).

Here, the employer brand has been identified as one such vehicle (attraction strategy) that may assist in gaining the desired outcome of increased applications for older workers specifically.

According to Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) employer branding is the long-term strategy that establishes the organisation's identity (discussed in the organisation identity section 2.3.3.3) as an employer and differentiates the organisation from the other competitors in the labour market. The argument is that employees develop an organisation identity as an outcome of the organisation's employer branding. They identified a three-step process of employer branding:

1. A concept of the value being offered to prospective and current employees is developed, which provides the main message to be communicated by the employer brand.
2. This value proposition is externally marketed to attract the targeted applicant.
3. The brand 'promise' made to external recruits is consistent internally. In other words, the last step is to internally market the employer brand.

A possible issue with the employer branding literature is that most of the studies used younger workers or graduates with no, or very recent, work experience. Whether or not these findings are transferable and can be generalised for the employer branding of older workers is yet to be investigated. However, the concept of employer branding is of interest to the study of older workers who might only be attracted to an organisation if it has a brand they like – which again addresses the question of how employers can attract this group.

2.3.3.2 Employer Value Proposition

Similar to consumer brands, it is argued that effective employer branding and brand management requires a clear employer brand proposition (Barrow and Mosley, 2005),

which is also commonly referred to as an employer/employee value proposition (EVP). The EVP refers to “the holistic sum of everything people experience and receive while they are part of the company” (Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod, 2001, p.49). In other words, it is the reason why a smart, energetic, ambitious individual would want to come to work for a particular organisation as opposed to any other (Chambers, Foulton, Handfield-Jones, Hankin and Michaels 1998).

According to Ambler and Barrow, the target audience for an employer brand consists of two different groups. Firstly there is the external group which houses the potential employees of the organisation and the EVP can be communicated to this group through formal channels, e.g., advertising, sponsorships, presentations and job interviews as well as informal channels, e.g. word-of-mouth or from current employees (Knox and Freeman, 2006). The objective here is to persuade a larger number and higher calibre of applicants to apply and accept the job offers with the organisation. Secondly, there is also the internal group with members made up of current employees of the organisation and the EVP here is communicated through internal media as well as conventional advertising (Berthon, Ewing and Hah, 2005). Hence there is a link between the EVP, recruitment and older workers in the sense that if organisations want to attract older workers they need to devise an EVP that attracts this specific group.

2.3.3.3 Organisation Identity and Image

The concept of organisation identity was first introduced by Albert and Whetten (1985). They presented a modernist definition of organisation identity as that which is central, distinctive and enduring about an organisation. Organisational identity is the cognitive image held by organisation members about their organisation. In other words, organisational identity occurs when an individual integrates their perception of their employer’s values into their personal beliefs, thereby bringing congruence between the individual and organisational ideals. This can happen in two ways, according to Pratt (1998). The first is through an affinity with an employer whereby the individual will self select to join an organisation that has values, which match their own beliefs. The second method of gaining congruence between the individual and the organisation is through

emulsion, where the individuals' beliefs will change during the time they are employed to become similar to those of their employer.

The understanding of organisational identity is generally considered to be valuable for a number of reasons. These include the notion that a shared sense of image and identity can provide institutional legitimacy that is required in the attraction of resources (Brown, 2001), and has been suggested as crucial to the long-term success of an organisation (Collins and Porras, 1996). However, Ainsworth (2002) argues that age identity and its implications for employment is still an under-researched topic area.

Organisation identity is often confused with the similar but separate concept of "image" which is the "sets of views on the organisation held by those who act as the organisation's 'others'" (Hatch and Schultz 2002, p.995). While organisation identity refers to what people see as their organisation's distinctive attributes, image refers to "that which people believe others see as distinctive about the organisation" (Dutton and Dukerich 1991, p.550). Within the recruitment literature, Tom (1971) describes image in general terms as the way people perceive an organisation as well as in precise terms as the structure of knowledge, beliefs and feelings about an organisation.

Few studies have examined the relationship between organisation image and attraction. Early studies, for example, Tom (1971), who used a sample of graduation students to evaluate their most and least preferred employer, found that applicants were inclined to prefer employers whose images were similar to their own self-image.

Next, the recruitment sources will be considered as they are important vehicles for attracting employees and organisations need to know which options are most attractive to older workers.

2.3.4 Recruitment Sources/Channels

Rynes and Barber (1990) posit that the success in attracting the desired employees might depend on the source(s) that are used to locate applicants. Job advertisements are often

the only sources of information available to a person making a decision about whether or not to apply for a job within an organisation (Highhouse, Stierwalt, Bachiochi, Elder, and Fisher, 1999).

Rees (1966) classified recruitment channels into two broad categories. (1) The formal recruitment channel, which includes: advertisements, employment agencies and student recruitment. (2) The informal recruitment channel which relies on the use of friends', relatives' and employees' referrals. In other words, social networks are used to spread job-related information through word-of-mouth. Simon and Warner (1992) identified informal recruitment channels to be effective as employers and employees exchange reliable information about each other. This in turn, according to Granovetter (1995), enables the prospective employee to form reliable expectations about the job, which are less likely to be disproved once hired.

Employers use recruitment channels to disperse information to all suitable and potential candidates about the characteristics of the vacancy (Russo, Rietveld, Nijkamp and Gorter, 2000). For example, Van Ours and Ridder (1993) identified that the use of advertisement increased the number of applicants applying for a position. According to Russo et al. (2000), the choice of recruitment channel that an employer uses will affect how the job related information is distributed (i.e. the visibility of job related information) which may consequently contribute to generate inequality. They also propose that the way in which employers search for candidates is dependent on the labour market's current economic conditions at the time of the search. What the research has not demonstrated is the extent to which different recruitment channels are required for different age groups. More specifically, would an advertisement on a social network website such as 'Facebook' or 'LinkedIn' be an appropriate channel for older workers? This is definitely a gap in the literature since these channels are increasing in popularity but there is no evidence that such media will attract older workers.

2.3.5 Recruitment Timing

Recruiting timing refers to the time between when a prospective applicant is identified, interviewed, and then offered the position. There are two hypotheses that have been offered as to how recruitment timing might work to an employer's advantage. Firstly, employers might reduce the chances of discouraging applicants if delays between the different recruitment times are avoided (Rynes, Heneman and Schwab, 1980). Secondly, employers who offer first may have an advantage over those who offer later as the uncertainty of searching for a job causes many applicants to favour actual offers over uncertain ones (Soelberg, 1967). None of the evidence suggests that there would be a difference in results depending on age.

2.3.6 Inducements (Total Rewards)

Referring back to Figure 2-2 (model of the attraction process) and moving along to the attraction strategies column to consider inducements, these are used “to convey the notion of deliberately modifying attributes for the explicit purpose of enhancing job attractiveness,” (Rynes and Barber, 1989, p.11). An example of this would be total rewards, which refers to all the tools at the disposal of the employer that may be used to attract, motivate and retain employees and includes everything the employee perceives to be of value resulting from the employment relationship. This includes both pecuniary and non-pecuniary returns provided to employees in exchange for their time, talents, efforts and results.

Rumpel and Medcof (2006, p.27) argue that total rewards take a “holistic approach to rewards, going beyond the strong focus on pay and benefits, which has been the hallmark of traditional compensation practice. A total reward considers all rewards available in the workplace including opportunities for learning and development”. They claim that in order for this to occur, the strategy must correctly identify which rewards are valued by the employees and whether they will achieve the desired attraction.

According to Gerhart and Rynes (2003), salaries and fringe benefits can be indistinguishable between organisations and therefore more intangible components of 'total rewards' (opportunities for progression, work-family balance etc.) are increasingly relied upon. Vandenberghe, St-Onge and Robineau (2008) used the 'Big Five' personality traits model (conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, emotional stability and openness to experience or open-mindedness) to predict attractiveness of various total rewards components. They also found that these personality traits accounted for six of the eight total rewards components studied (work content and social relationships, development and career opportunities, indirect pay, flexibility of working conditions and work prestige). Interestingly, age as a control variable was not associated with the total rewards components studied. However that is not to conclude that older workers would not be in favour of different rewards from younger workers as people are attracted by different inducements.

In Rynes and Barber's (1990) model of the attraction process, they did not consider Person-Organisation fit. However, the literature in this field seems relevant to the understanding of how employers can attract older workers through the 'fit' strategy which will be considered next since it seems to be an implied theme.

2.3.7 Person-Organisation Fit (P-O-fit)

Person environment fit theories put forward the notion that there are positive results, which occur when individuals fit or match the environment (Kroeger, 1995). Person environment fit is a general term for more specific perceptions of fit such as person-organisation fit (P-O fit), which refers to the match between an individual and the broader organisational attributes. Kristoff (1996, pp.4-5) define P-O fit as "the compatibility between people and organisations that occurs when (a) at least one entity provides what the other needs, or (b) they share similar fundamental characteristics, or (c) both".

The application of P-O fit to recruitment (and selection) surfaced as a result of Schneider's (1987) attraction-selection-attrition (ASA) model in which he proposed that attraction to, selection into and remaining in an organisation are all as a result of

perceiving there to be a similarity between the individual and their work environment (i.e. P-O fit).

Although P-O fit research has drawn numerous conclusions, for example that P-O fit can influence attraction to an organisation (Tom, 1971; Keon, Latack and Wanous, 1982) and job acceptance intentions (Bretz and Judge, 1994), knowledge of how employees fit is incomplete, according to Piasentin and Chapman (2007). To this end, Piasentin and Chapman examined whether P-O fit arises from perceptions of similarity (supplementary fit), complementarity or some combination of both (as per Kristoff's definition of P-O fit above). Piasentin and Chapman stated that an overarching assumption in the literature is that perceptions of P-O fit are experienced through an individual's perception of being similar to the existing organisational characteristics. For example, "the individual might perceive that his or her personality is congruent with the overall culture or image of the organisation or might determine that his/her values match the values of other employees in the organisation" (Piasentin and Chapman 2007, p.342).

Furthermore, Piasentin and Chapman continue that whenever the individual-organisational congruence is perceived, this *similar-to-me* phenomenon (i.e. the finding that individuals are more likely to be attracted to, join and remain in organisations when they perceive similarity; Schneider, 1987) is considered the main way individuals evaluate their P-O fit but that there is no understanding of whether all individuals use similarity to assess their fit with the organisation.

2.4 Workforce Diversity

There is a large body of literature in the area of diversity which this scoping study will not take account of since it falls outside the remit of relevance for answering the research question of what employers can do to attract and retain older workers. In mapping the field section, Figure 2-1 depicts 'diversity' as a smaller section for consideration due to the limited literature on older workers and diversity. Therefore, it was necessary to look at what employers were doing to attract other minority groups into their organisation since there might be an argument that these same strategies could also be used to attract

older workers. However, this is merely an assumption and the other minority groups might be attracted to organisations in completely different ways to those of older workers but firstly it needs to be made clear what is meant by the term ‘diversity’.

2.4.1 Definition of workforce diversity

There are many definitions of the term ‘diversity’ ranging from the narrow to very broad. Narrow definitions define diversity in terms of race, gender, ethnicity, age, national origin, religion and disability (Wheeler, 1994). While the broader definitions include sexual and affection orientation, values, personality characteristics, education, language, physical appearance, marital status, lifestyle, beliefs and background characteristics such as geographic origin, tenure with the organisation and economic status (Wentling and Palma-Rivas, 1998). To be more specific for this scoping study, Robbins and Judge, 2007, (p.17) provide a definition of workforce diversity, which relates to the notion that “organisations are becoming more heterogeneous in terms of gender, age, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and inclusion of other diverse groups”.

2.4.2 Targeted recruiting for diversity

Various equal opportunity areas have legislation in the UK commencing with the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, then the Race Relations Act 1976 and more recently the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. These Acts allow employers to positively encourage applications from groups that are under-represented in their workforce. While positive action is lawful and promoted by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, it is only for individuals to be motivated to apply whereas the selection is still on merit. An established method of such recruiting is targeted recruiting, where the mission is to locate, identify and attract potential employees (Rynes, 1991).

In a review of literature on targeted recruitment for women and minorities, Avery and McKay (2006) found that organisations which used pictures of these under-represented groups along with declarations of positive action were more attractive to women and minorities as it led them to feel that they would fit into the organisation – the conclusion

being that members of the under-represented group respond well to recruiting messages directed at them. Additionally, women and minorities also respond well to recruiters similar to them. These findings could be relevant to understanding the reasons why older workers (as another minority group) might also be attracted to an organisation. So the person-organisation fit literature (section 2.3.7) ties in with targeted recruiting for diversity since it seems to be the result of such efforts.

2.5 Recruitment Messages

Avery and McKay (2006) also considered how impression management (an attempt to control the image an individual presents to others) could boost recruiting messages. In this situation, the recruiter would try to portray a positive image of the organisation to women and minorities. This could be done via the use of ingratiation (the image of the organisation as a company that values diversity) through advertisement in targeted media by showing a diverse workforce working together along with diverse recruiters. Knouse (2009) argues that such promotion would attract prospective employees who expect to see a mixture of people in the organisation.

Williamson Rietveld, Nijkamp and Gorter (2008) note that increasing the understanding of what influences prospective applicants to be attracted to the organisation will assist in the development of recruitment practices for a diverse workforce. That said, it is also possible for individuals to have different attractiveness perceptions when exposed to the same media. Williamson et al. (2008) offer an explanation for these different perceptions as differences in opportunities historically may cause members of different racial groups to use different frameworks when making sense of the recruitment messages, resulting in racial group differences in organisational attraction (Highhouse et al., 1999).

There are clear reasons why organisations would want to recruit minority applicants, which have been mentioned earlier in terms of demographics, to comply with legal pressures, to enhance their public image and, according to Thomas and Ely (1996), so that the organisation can gain access to minority customers. These reasons are relevant to older workers since within this particular group there seem to be a number of differences

in the same way that others are placed into a group with which they have so many differences.

2.6 Conclusion and Systematic Review Questions

This scoping study has attempted to show the two main literature areas of relevance (older workers and recruitment) pertaining to the question of what employers can do to attract older workers. The study of older workers is of particular importance considering (but not limited to) the legal requirements against discrimination and the ageing of the population, which is threatening to cause an imbalance between the fewer numbers of younger people and the greater numbers of older people.

There was not a depth of literature on the topic of older workers especially when assessing the beginning of the recruitment cycle (the attraction phase), since the older workers seem to have been neglected in past research. On this basis quite a few assumptions have been made based on other research findings, which did not necessarily investigate the experiences of older workers directly. On the other hand, the literature on recruitment was vast but again the term ‘recruitment’ in itself covers different stages of the employment process and while selection has been of interest to many researchers, the attraction side has received less attention, which narrowed down the amount of literature to be considered. Faced with this challenge a peripheral literature of workplace diversity was initially included. While it covers other minority groups that were not directly relevant to this scoping study it did offer insight into the type of findings that might be similar to results that would be expected had older workers been researched specifically in those studies (instead of women, younger workers and minority groups).

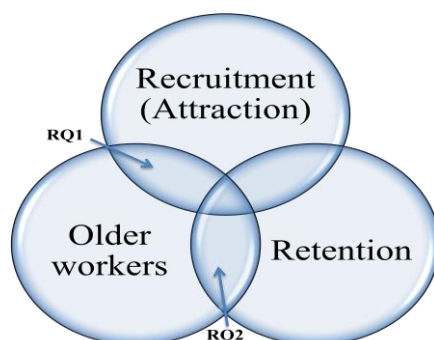
There seem to be a number of questions that could be asked of the literature when conducting the systematic review as a small amount of moulding of the literature was required in order to make it applicable to older workers. The general sense is that the research seems to be suggesting that the role of ‘fit’ is underlying a substantial number of investigations. For example, when looking at the attitudes towards older workers these are from the perspective of the employer and their notion of how successfully or

otherwise the older worker will fit into their organisation. When considering the various attraction strategies, these are how the prospective employee (older worker) measures their fit within the organisation; it is also how the organisation wants the prospective employee to perceive 'fit'. In other words their employer brand or image creates particular expectations, and these can differ from the reality of working for that employer (and might be a deliberate misconception by the employer).

2.6.1 Revised Mapping the Field

Following the results of the scoping study, it became clear that the fields of knowledge identified as important in understanding how employers attract older workers (older workers, recruitment and workforce diversity) could be better addressed with the omission of 'workforce diversity'. While it can be argued that older workers constitute part of a diverse group, it is not as distinctive as gender or race that remains static over time. On that basis the focus was changed as it was felt that looking at what attracts and retains this group could reveal a better perspective of the employment of these older workers. Additionally, it is deemed as more interesting to attempt to find out if what attracts an older worker to the organisation is the same as what retains them. Thus, the focal point is on the section between attraction and older worker, followed by that of retention and older worker. For this purpose a revised map showing the areas of literature that will inform this research has been amended, as per Figure 2-3.

Figure 2-3 Revised Mapping the Field Diagram



2.6.2 Systematic Review Questions

Following the scoping study, the broad review question that will be answered is '*How can employers attract and retain older workers?*' The literature areas for older workers and recruitment are sufficient to answer the first question. For the second part, the introduction of literature on retention was necessary as shown in the revised mapping of the field diagram shown in Figure 2-3. However, the question will be split into two separate review questions so that a thorough review can be completed and represented in a clear and concise manner. Therefore the systematic review questions are:

1. How do employers make themselves attractive to older workers? (RQ1)
2. How do employers retain older workers? (RQ2)

The next chapter describes the methodology used to answer these questions.

3 Methodology: the systematic review

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter located the problem, within the literature fields, of older workers' attraction and retention. This chapter used a systematic review to present a concise and transparent synthesis of the research evidence, thereby rendering it to be a useful decision-making tool for both practitioners and researchers. A systematic review has the following advantages as it offers an objective literature synopsis on a specific topic (Amick Brewer, Tullar, Van Eerd, Cole, and Tompa, 2009):

1. Distinct from a narrative review, a systematic review aims to assess the quality of the individual study and only then will endeavour to synthesise the evidence from studies deemed as of adequate quality. By removing the information from the studies of 'lower-quality' permits a greater level of confidence in the overall findings and messages;
2. In view of the fact that the basis of a systematic review is on the convergence of multiple research studies, the probability of being misinformed by research is lower and bias in the conclusions about intervention effectiveness is also lowered;
3. There is a higher level of efficiency as the research literature has already been identified, selected, appraised and synthesised in a systematic and transparent way by experts in the research field;
4. Scientific debate about systematic reviews is more constructive because discussions focus on quality appraisal and evidence synthesis rather than on why one study was identified and selected over others (Lavis, Posada, Haines, and Osei, 2004).

Systematic reviews differ from traditional narrative reviews by adopting a replicable, scientific and transparent process – in other words, a detailed technology, which aims to minimise bias through exhaustive literature searches of published and unpublished studies and by providing an audit trail of the reviewers' decisions, procedures and conclusions (Cook, Mulrow and Haynes, 1997).

Initially systematic reviews were used as a method by the medical sciences to provide a means for practitioners to use the evidence presented by research to inform their decisions (Tranfield, Denyer, and Smart, 2003). According to Tranfield et al. (2003, p.220), the aim of a systematic review is to provide collective insights through theoretical synthesis into fields and sub-fields. For academics, the reviewing process increases methodological rigour. For practitioners/managers, a systematic review helps develop a reliable knowledge base by accumulating knowledge from a range of studies.

While a systematic review protocol was built in this section to enable the author to search, identify, select, critique and ultimately to synthesise the literature, this protocol was subject to changes due to new information, consultation and personal choice during the process. However, the author was cognisant of the necessity to remain transparent, therefore every alteration will be made explicit and accounted for.

3.2 Consultation Panel

During the systematic literature review process, the author relied on consultation from the following individuals (Table 3-1) who are experts and advisors on the content and structure of the review. This panel did not meet formally but the author contacted them and met personally where possible for input, as appropriate to their area of expertise.

Table 3-1 Systematic Review Panel

Name	Organisation	Role in the review
Dr. Emma Parry	Cranfield School of Management	Supervisor
Dr. Deirdre Anderson	Cranfield School of Management	Internal advisor
Dr. Colin Pilbeam	Cranfield School of Management	Systematic review expert
Dr. Clare Kelliher	Cranfield School of Management	Dr. Parry's Mentor
Ms Heather Woodfield	Cranfield University Library	Literature search advisor

Dr Emma Parry is the authors' supervisor and therefore regular contact was imperative in order to sustain focus, ascertain and confirm literature gaps as well as working together to ensure that key papers were not missed. She is also a systematic review expert so her input was invaluable.

Dr Deirdre Anderson is a lecturer in Organisational Behaviour, Qualitative Research Methods and People Management at Cranfield University. Her research interests include flexible working, demands from both the work and non-work domains as well as seeking to raise awareness of diversity and inclusion. The author aimed to have frequent communication with Dr Anderson throughout her studies, as this expertise on flexible working and diversity management will be quite relevant to my area of research.

Dr Colin Pilbeam is a Senior Research Fellow and Director of the PhD Programme at Cranfield University. He is also a specialist in the systematic review process therefore his advice assisted in ensuring that the aims of the review were adhered to or modified if required.

Dr Clare Kelliher is a Senior Lecturer in Strategic Human Resource Management at Cranfield University. She specialises in the fields of employee relations, and people and change management. Her research interests centre on the organisation of work, flexible working and the management of the employment relationship in the context of organisational change. Dr Kelliher is also Dr Parry's mentor in her role as the authors' supervisor.

Ms Heather Woodfield is an information and data extraction expert at Cranfield University. She had already been helpful in the use of software (e.g. Refworks) at the outset of the systematic review and was a continued source of valuable support for this systematic review and beyond into the PhD, to further assist with searching the literature (e.g. search strings, keywords and databases).

3.3 Search Strategy

It was pertinent to design a robust search strategy in order to systematically and comprehensively identify and uncover all the relevant literature that assisted in answering the systematic review questions. While it may not be exhaustive, it did at least allow the exploration of many sources of information. Only secondary data was consulted, therefore the following sources of information were utilised: electronic databases, and any panel recommendations. Refworks was used to store all retrieved articles, which were then be grouped by key topic areas relevant to the proposed research.

3.3.1 Keywords and Search Strings

The following keywords (Table 3-2) and search strings (Table 3-3) were used when conducting the database search. These keywords were selected due to the literature consulted to date and also to be fairly broad in order to capture, as much of the relevant literature as possible but this was refined in the early stages of the systematic review depending on the quality of the references found.

Furthermore, truncation and wildcard characters (? and *) were used to ensure that all word variations were accounted for. These keyword searches were confined mainly to the title and abstract, or solely to the abstract.

Table 3-2 Keywords for electronic database

Theme	Concept	Keywords
1.	Organisation	Organisation, employer, company, firm
2.	Attract	Attract, job choice, recruitment
3.	Older	Older, over fifty, mature, baby boomer, senior, middle aged, older employee, elderly, post retirement, late career stage
4.	Worker	Worker, employee, workforce, applicant, staff, labour, personnel, human resource
5.	Retain	Retention, retain, attrition

Table 3-3 Search strings for electronic database

Search strings	Rationale
<u>Theme 1, Theme 2, Theme 3 & Theme 4:</u> (organi?ation OR employ* OR company OR firm) AND (attract* OR job choice OR recruit*) AND (old* OR over fift* OR mature OR baby boom* OR middle age* OR post retirement OR late career stage) AND (worker OR workforce OR appl* OR staff OR labor OR labour OR personnel OR human resource*)	<i>RQ1: How do organisations make themselves attractive to older workers?</i> The search strings construct to answer this question were from: theme 1, theme 2, theme 3 and theme 4 as illustrated from the keywords above: 1 + 2 + 3 + 4. The search strings may not seem exhaustive but this is the result of various combinations that were put together and searched on the databases in order to reveal the most relevant results to answer RQ1.
<u>Theme 1, Theme 3, Theme 4 & Theme 5:</u> (organi?ation OR employ* OR company OR firm) AND (old* OR over fift* OR mature OR baby boom* OR middle age* OR post retirement OR late career stage) AND (worker OR workforce OR appl* OR staff OR labor OR labour OR personnel OR human resource*) AND (retention OR retain OR attrition)	<i>RQ2: How do organisations retain older workers?</i> The search strings construct to answer this question were from: theme 1, theme 3, theme 4 and theme 5 as illustrated from the keywords above: 1 + 3 + 4 + 5. The search strings may not seem exhaustive but this is the result of various combinations that were put together and searched on the databases in order to reveal the most relevant results to answer RQ2.

3.3.2 Databases

The following electronic databases, as listed in Table 3-4, were used to conduct the searches. A description, as depicted by the respective company, is offered as well the rationale for choosing them. A non-systematic pilot search was conducted on all of the databases in order to ensure that relevant information was contained and to therefore provide evidence of its importance as a resource. This was a basic search on the keywords to answer RQ1 by using relevant themes (1 + 2 + 3 + 4) before the

inclusion/exclusion criteria or any quality checks and just on an abstract search of scholarly papers on the databases, the results of this search are stated in table 3-4.

Table 3-4 Description of the electronic databases

Database	Description and explanation
ABI/INFORM Global	<p>ABI/INFORM Global is one of the most comprehensive business databases on the market. It includes in-depth coverage for over 3,380 publications, with more than 2,380 available in full text. It covers: business conditions, management techniques, business trends, management practice and theory, corporate strategy and tactics, and competitive landscape¹.</p> <p>This was particularly useful in further exploring the areas of older workers, attraction and retention as depicted in the protocol for mapping the field. This was the first database demonstrated by Ms Heather Woodfield and previous searches had yielded good results. Pilot search result for RQ1 = 496</p>
EBSCO Business Source Complete	<p><i>Business Source Complete</i> is the world's definitive scholarly business database, providing the leading collection of bibliographic and full text content. As part of the comprehensive coverage offered by this database, indexing and abstracts for the most important scholarly business journals as far back as 1886 are included. In addition to the searchable cited references provided for more than 1,300 journals, <i>Business Source Complete</i> contains detailed author profiles for the 40,000 most cited authors in the database².</p> <p>With all areas of management being covered, a wealth of information was found here. It was useful in its breadth of coverage as non-journal content includes: books, case studies, company profiles etc. However, there was an overlap with ABI but the author preferred the search functionality of ABI. Pilot search result for RQ1 = 474</p>
PsycINFO	<p><i>PsycINFO</i> is an electronic bibliographic database providing abstracts and citations for the scholarly literature in the psychological, social, behavioural and health sciences. The database includes material of relevance to psychologists and professionals in related fields such as psychiatry, management, business, education, social science, neuroscience, law, medicine and social work. Updated weekly, <i>PsycINFO</i> provides access to journal articles, books, chapters, and dissertations³.</p> <p>This database was good in ensuring that the author kept abreast of relevant research in all the areas of interest for the systematic review but served better as secondary database for cross referencing. Pilot search result for RQ1 = 440</p>

¹ http://www.proquest.com/en-US/catalogs/databases/detail/abi_inform_global.shtml

² http://support.ebsco.com/help/?int=ehost&lang=en&feature_id=Databases&TOC_ID=Always&SI=0&BU=0&GU=1&PS=0&ver=live&dbs=bthjnh,bth

³ <http://csaweb112v.csa.com/factsheets/psycinfo-set-c.php?SID=8hu04cc111ja4hqa3g6mvtc2s1>

3.3.3 Alternative Sources of Information

In addition to the electronic databases listed in table 3-4, other sources of information were consulted to ensure that the possibilities of mistakenly omitting seminal works were reduced. These additional sources of information are listed in Table 3-5.

Table 3-5 Alternative Sources of Information

Alternative source	Explanation
Books	Books simply cannot be ignored as a source of information. While they may not be as readily searchable as in databases they can be particularly useful and relevant in terms of providing the general ideas behind the topic areas and connecting the prospective. Recommendations for books were requested as a result of panel advice or identified through the cross-referencing process.
Professional and practitioner journals, websites and internet documents	The topic of ‘older workers’ specifically is achieving the most discussions in professional and practitioner journals. In this realm, older workers are receiving a lot of attention as a hot topic and therefore as a practical issue for organisations small-scale studies are being conducted, so this was a good way of accessing current information. For the other topic areas (recruitment and retention) these sources were less important but the quality appraisal criteria were used to appraise their quality.
Working papers or unpublished papers	Working papers, if they were less than three years old were proposed as a useful source in order to obtain the most up to date research on the topic. The premise being that anything older should have been published already if it had been of a reasonable quality.
Conference papers	Conference papers less than three years old were proposed as a useful source in order to obtain the most up to date research on the topic. The premise again being that anything older should have been published already if it had been of a reasonable quality.
Documents on the internet	In the main these were not used as part of the systematic review due to lack of editorial control but were used to scope the subject area and to emphasise the wants/needs/requirements of older workers that are not currently being academically studied.
Reports from relevant institutions: companies, public bodies etc	Government, companies and public bodies (e.g. Joseph Rowntree Foundation) have good summaries and statistical information that can be useful.
Personal requests to subject experts and practitioners	This was in the form of a final measure after the databases were consulted as experienced researchers were able to shed light on why particular approaches have been rejected or able to provide further lines of contact.

3.4 Selection criteria

Following the process of using search strings on the databases, as depicted in section 3-3, selection criteria was implemented to appraise the papers identified in terms of whether or not they should be included or excluded before moving on to consider the quality of the papers.

3.4.1 Selection criteria for title and abstract

Table 3-6 shows the inclusion criteria and Table 3-7 the exclusion criteria based on the title and abstract, as well as the rationale for doing so.

Table 3-6 Inclusion criteria and rationale based on title and abstract

Inclusion Criteria	Rationale
Older workers	The main subject of the paper is the older worker; however, attraction for all types of applicants (regardless of age, gender, ethnicity etc.) to an organisation was also relevant in answering RQ1.
Recruitment	The area of recruitment is wide but the systematic review only focused on the attraction part of recruitment for RQ1 (as opposed to selection).
Retention	Only papers on retention with a focus on the older worker were included for RQ2.
Public and private sector organisations research	All types of organisations (as employers) were of relevance to answering both research questions.
No restriction regarding location	All countries that have conducted research on older workers can provide useful findings. Although it was recognised that cultural difference can play a role in the perception of older workers within their society, e.g. the age bias in Western cultures where youth is glorified is opposed to the way that elders in the Chinese culture are highly respected and obeyed (Ho, 1996).
No restriction regarding industry	The experience of older workers in all types of industry was relevant.
Methods (quantitative/qualitative studies) and type (empirical/analytical)	The type, perspective or method was not relevant as all have useful qualities to offer.

Table 3-7 Exclusion criteria and rationale based on title and abstract

Exclusion Criteria	Rationale
Complete gerontological research	Studies on all aspects of ageing and the elderly were not relevant in part because the truly elderly will generally not be still working.
Non English language research	English speaking author.
Recruitment selection	The systematic review only considered recruitment as it relates to attraction, which is aimed at attracting individuals to an organisation, as opposed to selection that is aimed at distinguishing the most qualified among those individuals, attracted.
Discrimination	When considering the recruitment of older workers, this is usually linked to discrimination issues, which was not the focus of this paper.
Health issues	As above, many papers on the topic of older workers are with regard to associated health issues, which was not the focus of this paper.

3.4.2 Selection criteria for full papers

Table 3-8 shows the inclusion criteria and Table 3-9 shows the exclusion criteria for full papers as well as the rationale for doing so. During this stage, the entire article was read to apply the inclusion/exclusion criteria with greater specificity.

Table 3-8 Inclusion criteria and rationale based on full papers

Inclusion Criteria	Rationale
Older workers	The main subject of the paper is the older worker; however, attraction for all types of applicants (regardless of age, gender, ethnicity etc.) to an organisation was also relevant in answering RQ1.
Recruitment	The area of recruitment is wide but the systematic review focused on the attraction part of recruitment for RQ1 (as opposed to selection).
Retention	Only papers on retention with a focus on the older worker were included for RQ2.
Public and private sector research	All types of organisation were of relevance.
No restriction regarding location	All countries that have conducted research on older workers could have provided useful findings. Although it is recognised that cultural difference can play a role in the perception of older workers within their society for example; the age bias in Western cultures where youth is glorified is oppose to the way that elders in the Chinese culture are highly respected and obeyed (Ho, 1996).
No restriction regarding industry	The experience of older workers in all types of industry was relevant.
Methods (quantitative/qualitative studies) and type (empirical/analytical)	The type, perspective or method was not relevant as all have useful qualities to offer.

Table 3-9 Exclusion criteria and rationale based on full papers

Exclusion Criteria	Rationale
Complete gerontological research	Studies on all aspects of ageing and the elderly were not be relevant in part because the truly elderly will generally not be still working.
Recruitment selection	The systematic review only considered recruitment as it relates to attraction, which is aimed at attracting individuals to an organisation, as opposed to selection, which is aimed at distinguishing the most qualified among those individuals attracted.
Discrimination	When considering the recruitment of older workers this is usually linked to discrimination issues, which was not the focus of this paper.
Health issues	As above, many papers on the topic of older workers are with regard to associated health issues, which was not the focus of this paper.
Relevance of information	Papers may pass the inclusion criteria based on the title and abstract but the rigour comes at this stage where the relevance of the text was determined once the contents were read in full.
Volume of information	While no length restriction was imposed, the paper needed to contain enough information on the target areas of interest (older worker and attraction or retention) in order to be viable for inclusion.

Numerous papers that successfully passed the selection criteria based on the title and abstract where later excluded at the following stage based on the selection criteria for full papers. This can be demonstrated with an article by Hollywood and McQuaid (2007)⁴ that was initially included in the systematic review after reading the abstract that mentioned the need for employers to set strategies to attract older workers in the area but upon a full read of the paper it was apparent that the focus was on the changes occurring to the aging population rather than how this growing population could be attracted (see Appendix A for the data extraction form). This therefore passed the criteria of older worker and recruitment (attraction), while the other inclusion criterion's of: sector; location; industry and method of research were not applicable so did not prevent the article from being included.

Reasons for exclusion were also considered but this particular article could not be excluded at the title and abstract stage because it did not contain gerontological research, was written in English, and was not about selection, discrimination or health issues in the

⁴ Hollywood, E., and McQuaid, R. W. (2007). Employers' Responses to Demographic Changes in Rural Labour Markets: The Case of Dumfries and Galloway. *Local Economy*, 22(2), 148-162

main. However upon review of the whole paper, the article did not pass the exclusion criteria for full papers. More specifically this paper has been excluded due to relevance in answering RQ1. While the paper looked at the population aging in a particular area it did not address how employers could best attract the workforce (older workers) that are now forming the pool of potential employees. The paper suggested that employers were willing to employ older workers but were unable to attract this group of people. The authors provided no suggestion on methods of attracting older workers. The criteria were applied in stages, firstly using the title and abstract to follow each inclusion and exclusion criteria then for the papers that were included they were read in full. After this the inclusion and exclusion criteria process was repeated for full papers before embarking on the quality appraisal.

3.5 Quality Appraisal

3.5.1 Quality appraisal for full papers

For those papers that met the inclusion criteria set out above, a subsequent criterion was imposed for the full text papers, which ensured further rigour. The following criteria are as a result of reviewing previous systematic review protocols as it was felt that additional checking assists in identifying those papers of relevance.

Conceptual/theoretical papers must have contained:

- A comprehensive literature review
- An explicit identification of the theories/models that apply to the older worker, either for retention or recruitment (attraction)
- Clear and logical assumptions made
- An explanation of the relationship between theory/model and existing empirical evidence
- Discussion on limitations and possible further research

Empirical papers must have contained:

- A comprehensive literature review
- A clear explanation of the methodology and justification for use
- An explicit description of the sample used and collection procedure
- Clear reporting, presentation and results to be supported by the conclusion
- A contribution to existing knowledge about the older worker, either for retention or recruitment (attraction)
- Discussion on limitations, implications of the results and possible further research

3.5.2 Critical assessment for full papers

After the papers had been selected through the use of the inclusion and exclusion criteria based on their title and abstract shown above, then the selection criteria for full papers, the following stage was used to reduce the number of relevant papers down to a manageable level. These papers' full text was then evaluated through the critical review process in full to assess its quality. This ensured that only high quality and relevant papers were included in the final review. Tables 3-10 and 3-11 show the quality appraisal criteria used to appraise the papers through the use of scores between 0 and 3. Papers that scored 0 in three or more categories were not selected for data extraction for both empirical and conceptual papers.

Table 3-10 Quality Appraisal for Full Empirical Papers

Criteria	Rating				
	Absence = 0	Low/poor = 1	Medium = 2	High/good = 3	Not Applicable
Theoretical background	Does not provide enough information to access criteria	Little or weak description of theory	Basic review of the theory with some practical rationale	Excellent summary of prior literature, concepts clearly defined, strong theory base	N/A
Methodology	Does not provide enough information to access criteria	Inconsistent in the research question and inappropriate methodology	Justified research design and appropriate methodology to develop basic idea	Clear link between the research question and theory, and excellent interpretation	N/A
Data analysis	Does not provide enough information to access criteria	Weak connection between findings and discussions	Appropriate data sample and results examined sufficiently	Adequate data sample and results well supported and explained with clear analysis of limitations	N/A
Contribution to knowledge	Does not provide enough information to access criteria	Little or weak theoretical or empirical contribution, using only existing ideas and concepts	Justified theoretical and empirical contribution but only on specific aspects, builds on existing knowledge	Excellent quality and significantly contributes to knowledge	N/A
Limitations and future research	Does not provide enough information to access criteria	Little information to assess criteria	Limitations provided but not relevant to knowledge, future research mentioned	Explicitly states the limitations of the study and provides areas for further research which are presented in detail	N/A

(Appraisal based on similar tool developed by previous 1st year Cranfield PhD students)

Table 3-11 Quality Appraisal for Full Conceptual/Theoretical Papers

Criteria	Rating				
	Absence = 0	Low/poor = 1	Medium = 2	High/good = 3	Not Applicable
Comprehensive literature review	Does not provide enough information to access criteria	Little or weak review of existing literature	Basic review of the literature	Excellent review of the literature and concepts clearly defined	N/A
An explicit identification of the theories/models that apply to existing knowledge about the older worker, either for retention or recruitment (attraction)	Does not provide enough information to access criteria	Limited identification of relevant theories or models	Some identification of relevant theories or models	Adequate identification of relevant theories or models	N/A
Clear and logical assumptions made	Does not provide enough information to access criteria	Weak and confusing assumptions made	Reasonable assumptions made	Explicit assumptions made	N/A
An explanation of the relationship between theory/model and existing empirical evidence	Does not provide enough information to access criteria	Weak connection between theory/model and existing empirical evidence	Appropriate explanation of the relationship between theory/model and existing empirical evidence	Strong link between theory/model and existing empirical evidence	N/A
Discussion on limitations and possible further research	Does not provide enough information to access criteria	Little information to access criteria	Limitations provided but does not relate to knowledge. Future research mentioned	Clearly states limitations and possible further research	N/A

3.6 Data Extraction

For ease of retrieval and to manage the data without difficulty, it was vital that the reviewed papers and relevant information were continuously treated in a systematic manner. Thus once the papers had passed all the aforementioned stages they were then summarised with the assistance of the data extraction form shown in Table 3-12.

Table 3-12 Data Extraction Form

Date Extraction Form	
Details of publication	
Title	
Author(s)	
Source (journal/conference etc)	
Year/volume/issue/pages/country of origin	
Topic area	
Keywords	
Research question	
Aim	
Topic area	
Methodology	
Methods (empirical/theoretical, case study/survey, positivist/phenomenological, quantitative/qualitative etc)	
Sample size	
Type of organisation/sector	
Thematic information	
Short abstract	
Main findings/suggested framework/results/conclusions	
Does it answer the RQ?	
If so, in what way?	
Participation in the study	
Characteristics of participants (age, sex, class, ethnicity, geographical location, health status, income status, other information)	
Recruitment/attraction procedures highlighted	
Retention procedures highlighted	
Quality assessment	
Theoretical background (0-3)	
Methodology (0-3)	
Data analysis (0-3)	
Contribution to knowledge (0-3)	
Limitations and future research (0-3)	
Reviewer's decision	
Inclusion/exclusion	
Reason for exclusion	
Other comments	

3.7 Synthesis

Synthesis involves the collation, combination and summary of the findings of individual studies to be included in the systematic review. Synthesis can be done quantitatively using formal statistical techniques such as meta-analysis, or if formal pooling of results is inappropriate, through a narrative approach. As well as drawing results together, synthesis should consider the strength of evidence, explore whether any observed effects are consistent across studies, and investigate possible reasons for any inconsistencies. This enables reliable conclusions to be drawn from the assembled body of evidence (CRD, 2009 p.57). In other words the data synthesis broadly aimed to follow three steps:

1. Identify findings;
2. Group the findings into the predetermined categories (quality, themes etc);
3. Group these categories into synthesised findings.

This synthesis of the data was a really important part of the systematic review process because failure to perform the previous stages correctly would be made clear at this point if a transparent picture of representation of the literature had been unsuccessfully made. However, with this synthesis successfully completed, a comprehensive review would be produced that pulled together the literature to form a clear, logical and coherent understanding of the way in which older workers can be attracted and retained within organisation.

3.8 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the methodology that was used to generate the relevant papers required for the systematic review. This involved documenting the search strategy and search strings as well as both the inclusion and exclusion criteria adopted. The quality appraisal conducted, data extraction and synthesis stages were outlined. The next chapter presents the findings drawn from the research papers.

4 Descriptive Results

4.1 Introduction

The methodology used to gather these results have been stated with some detail in the previous chapter, which took account of the search strategy utilised, the selection criteria adopted, the quality appraisal criteria used and lastly the data extraction and synthesis stages. This chapter presents the findings of the systematic review, which has broadly been organised into two sections that separate the core papers chosen for the review as they pertain to answering either RQ1 or RQ2. This will assist in adding further transparency because there were an inadequate number of relevant papers to answer RQ1 while the number of papers relevant to answer RQ2 was greater. The next chapter contains the thematic findings, which summarise the major ideas and arguments as they are presented in the papers. It is hoped that jointly this approach will help to depict a clearer picture of the reviewed literature and provide a useful insight into the field of research.

4.2 Descriptions

This section summarises the descriptive characteristics of the reviewed sources for both research questions.

4.2.1 Quality Appraisal Criteria Relaxed for RQ1

It must be noted that due to the very low number of relevant papers identified through this process the decision was taken to relax the quality appraisal for full papers (only for RQ1). This related in part to areas such as: explicit identification of the theories/models that apply to the older worker, retention or recruitment and a contribution to existing knowledge. However, the main issue encountered was through the simple lack of research that focused on the older worker as opposed to the numerous papers that focused on the recruitment of younger workers.

While the keyword search on the databases produced a sufficient number of papers that passed the inclusion criteria, the obstacle occurred at the quality appraisal criteria stage, which would have resulted in only four papers being included if the process had been rigorously adhered to. Therefore the decision was taken to also include papers that scored ‘0’ in three or more categories of the quality appraisal criteria (contrary to section 3.5.2). The consequence of this was that papers, which were not as academically comprehensive as intended, were used as a source of information for answering RQ1.

4.2.2 Core papers by database

Table 4-1 List of core papers by database for RQ1

Database	Initial Search	Rejected or Duplicated	Accepted (Title/Abstract)	Accepted (Full Paper)	Accepted (Quality)
ProQuest	312	195	117	43	12
EBSCO	187	124	63	12	1
PsycINFO	179	152	27	0	0
Total	678	471	207	55	13

Table 4-1 presents the number of papers acquired from ProQuest, EBSCO and PsycINFO. The search strings were firstly administered using the ProQuest database, which yielded the highest number of relevant papers on the initial hit. It was decided that due to these higher number of hits, in comparison to the other databases, it would be a good starting point to be able to identify any duplications that later occurred in the other databases. The majority of papers were then rejected from the databases as a result of duplication or mainly due to irrelevance in answering RQ1. The issue of relevance was mentioned in the exclusion criteria section and while the quality of the papers included (for RQ1 only) may be questionable, the majority of papers had to be rejected upon reading the abstract because it became apparent that the contents were not pertaining to research on the older worker. To be more specific, the term older worker may have been mentioned but the focus of the research, for example, may not have used older workers as the participants.

While no papers came directly from PsycINFO for use in the systematic review, it did contain relevant papers that had already been found on either ProQuest or EBSCO.

Table 4-2 List of core papers by database for RQ2

Database	Initial Search	Rejected or Duplicated	Accepted (Title/Abstract)	Accepted (Full Paper)	Accepted (Quality)
ProQuest	179	51	128	39	15
EBSCO	106	51	55	21	3
PsycINFO	89	77	12	2	0
Total	374	179	195	62	18

As shown in Table 4-2, ProQuest yielded the most results but once more this was in part as a result of papers being omitted from the other databases due to duplication or irrelevance in answering RQ2.

The search strings actually produced far fewer papers to review in total for RQ2 compared to RQ1. The overall numbers are quite deceptive in the sense that RQ1's search string generated many papers but the majority could not be used in the review due to quality issues. For RQ2, the total number of papers generated was lower but the relevancy of the papers was found to be slightly higher than the results for RQ1. Again, while no papers came directly from PsycINFO for use in the systematic review, it did contain relevant papers that had already been found on either ProQuest or EBSCO.

4.2.2.1 Reason for Full Papers inclusion

As shown in the table 4-1 and table 4-2, there is a marked difference between the number of papers being included after the title and abstract search and the full paper inclusion. For both RQ1 and RQ2 the reasons are mainly because the content of the paper was not relevant to the intension of this systematic review. Upon reading the full papers it would become apparent that the focus would not assist the aims of this systematic review to build an argument or to increase understanding about the attraction and retention of older workers to an organisation.

Typically when a paper appeared to be relevant, for example, because it is about older workers and attraction or retention, further reading may reveal that focus is on why older workers should be attracted or retained; or the benefits of attracting and retaining older workers; rather than how this attraction or retention can be achieved. Other examples of this would be papers that centre on stereotypes, demographic changes (i.e. how organisations are adjusting to the changes), implications of having an older workforce, barriers to employment for older workers or their early retirement intentions.

A central finding of this systematic review has been the lack of research on older workers specifically and the number of papers included in the review can demonstrate this. While initial searches on the database reveal a reasonable number of papers the dramatic difference can be noted once the material is read which then highlights the relevancy problem by containing information that could not be used for this review.

4.2.3 Core papers by year of publication

Table 4-3 List of core papers by year of publication

Year	RQ1	RQ2
1989	1	0
1992	1	0
1995	1	1
1997	2	1
2000	2	1
2001	1	0
2005	1	2
2006	1	2
2007	0	1
2008	0	3
2009	2	5
2010	1	2
Total	13	18

Table 4-3 assists in highlights that there have been discussions occurring regarding the attraction of older workers over the past two decades but they do not seem to have resulted in a large quantity of research. As explained in the scoping study, the area of

recruitment being considered in this paper is solely with regard to the ‘attraction’ of an older worker to an organisation, as opposed to the more often studied selection process or its link to workers with other characteristics (for example; gender, ethnicity etc). In other words, there were papers that focused on selection but it is not the intention of this review to use them.

4.2.4 Core papers by geographical location

Table 4-4 presents the papers selected for the systematic review according to the geographical location of the papers. This shows that the US had the most relevant papers for RQ1 followed by the UK. For RQ2, most of the literature on retention of older workers comes from the UK, with Canada as second.

Table 4-4 List of core papers by geographical location

Country	RQ1	RQ2
Australia	1	2
Belgium	0	2
Canada	2	5
UK	3	7
US	7	2
Total	13	18

Figure 4-1 shows the percentage of papers by geographical location for RQ1 and Figure 4-2 for RQ2

Figure 4-1 Percentage of core papers by geographical location for RQ1

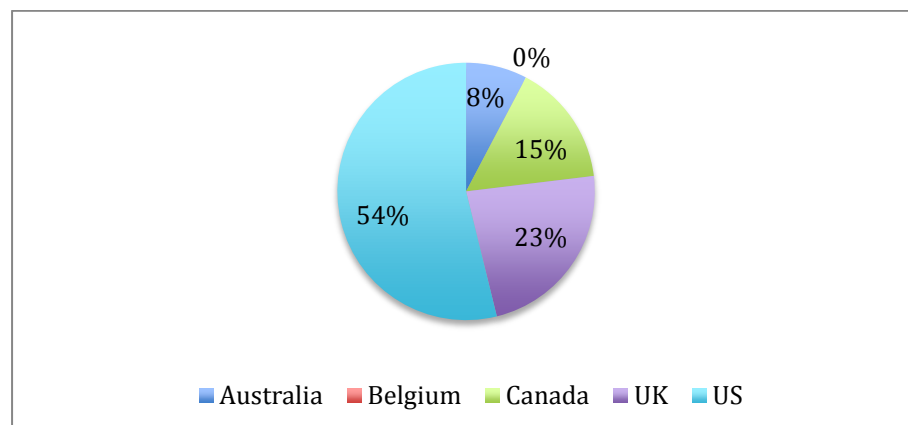
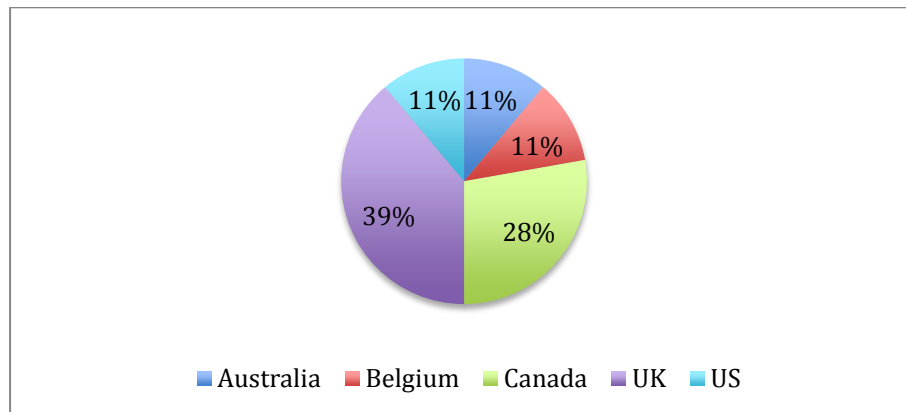


Figure 4-2 Percentage of core papers by geographical location for RQ2



It is not surprising to find that the US has the more relevant articles because they introduced their age discrimination laws in 1967 so should have been conducting research on the attraction of older workers into the organisation to gain a better understanding of its potential impact both at a micro and macro level. Similarly, with the UK and its age discrimination law that dates back to 2006, the expectation would have been a greater number of studies on attracting older workers around this time.

4.2.5 Core papers by method of analysis

It was found that most of the research is still theoretical/conceptual in nature (as shown in table 4-5) which provides some evidence that there is scope for empirical research to be conducted for RQ1. Of the six papers that use empirical research, the quality criteria measures were relaxed (only for RQ1) because without this decision being made there would not have been enough papers to conduct the review. However, the papers for RQ2 were mainly empirical in nature. The quality problems identified will be addressed in the next chapter.

Table 4-5 List of core papers by method of analysis

Research Method	RQ1	RQ2
Empirical	6	16
Theoretical/Conceptual	7	2
Total	13	18

The percentages of papers by method of analysis are represented in Figure 4-3 for RQ1 and Figure 4-4 for RQ2

Figure 4-3 Percentage of papers by method of analysis for RQ1

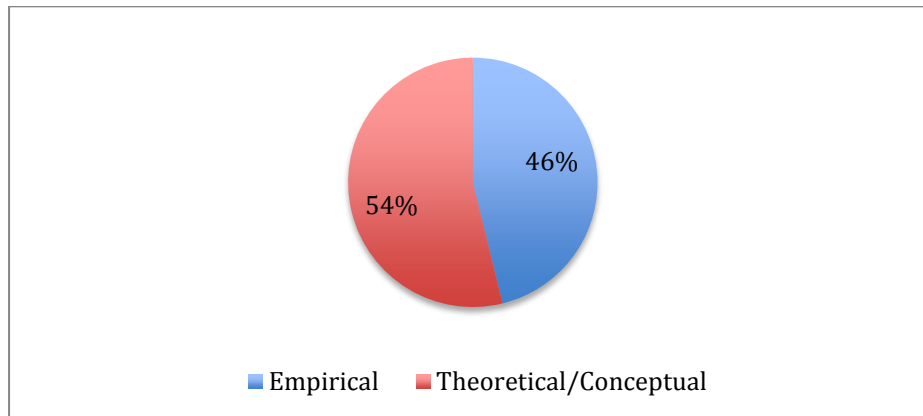
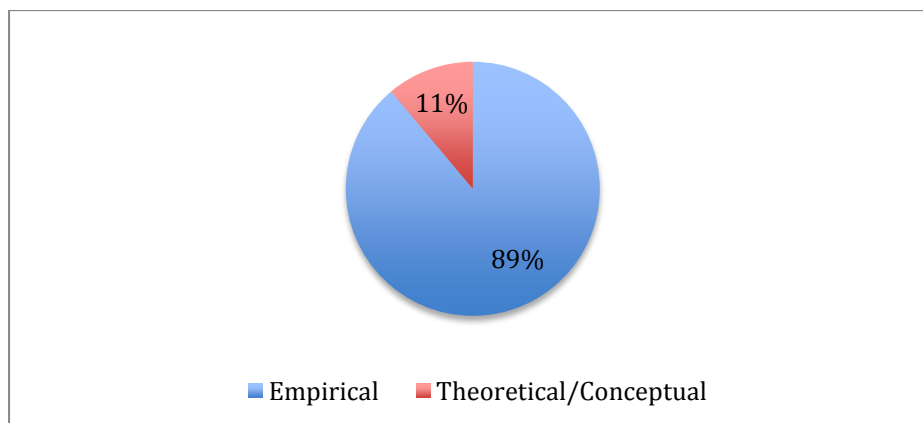


Figure 4-4 Percentage of papers by method of analysis for RQ2



4.2.6 Core papers by journals

Table 4-6 shows that the Employee Relations Journal has produced the most relevant papers to answer RQ1, as identified by the systematic review process, as well as for RQ2. It was intended that books, conference papers, working papers, reports as well as personal requests to subject experts and practitioners would form part of this review as indicated in the systematic review protocol, section 3.3.3, since they can all be valuable sources of information. However, only journals were consulted as part of this systematic review. For this reason, it is acknowledged that this systematic review may not be as comprehensive as intended.

Table 4-6 List of core papers by journal

Journal	RQ1	RQ2
Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources	0	1
Australian Bulletin of Labour	1	0
Business Horizons	1	0
Career Development International	0	2
Employee Relations	4	3
Human Resource Management Journal	0	2
Human Resource Planning	1	1
Journal of Advanced Nursing	0	1
Journal of European Industrial Training	0	1
Journal of Health Organisation and Management	0	1
Journal of Labour Research	1	0
Journal of Management Psychology	0	2
Journal of Management Development	0	1
Journal of Occupational and Organisational Psychology	1	1
Journal of Organisational Behaviour	1	0
Journal of Small Business Strategy	1	1
Management Review	1	0
Public Personnel Management	1	0
Social Forces	0	0
Strategic HR Review	0	0
Work	0	1
Total	13	18

4.2.7 Cross-Referencing

Due to the low number of relevant papers identified for the review, it was necessary to pay particular attention to cross-referencing as a means of discovering additional papers that were not found during the databases search. Of the 13 articles identified for RQ1, four additional papers were found by this means.

The four papers were by: Taylor and Earnshaw, 1995; Terry and White, 1997; Doverspike, Taylor, Shultz, and McKay, 2000; Loretto, White and Duncan, 2000. All were mentioned in literature found by the databases (for example; Terry and White's paper was mentioned in Gough and Hick's paper) but not identified through the

specific keyword search. These papers were found by searching specifically for the article. The additional papers went through the inclusion/exclusion process before consideration of the quality criteria. This function was the most subjective part of the systematic review, as the decision to include a paper that is not following the meticulous protocol may not necessarily be replicated if the process is repeated.

Ideally a paper would conform to the inclusion criteria and score high on the quality appraisal criteria but papers made it into this review for RQ1 that were not as comprehensive and thorough as would have been expected.

4.3 Conclusion

In the previous section, the descriptive findings were highlighted which served to indicate the following:

The study of recruitment attraction as it pertains to older workers as a group is scarce and illustrates the infancy of this field (attracting older workers) as it sits within the more popular field of recruitment in general. Therefore, very little empirical work has been developed which means that the research to be presented is conceptual or theoretical in its nature for RQ1. On the other hand the number of papers included in the systematic review, that were identified as being relevant to answering RQ2, are in contrast to a greater amount of papers found to be relevant without having to compromise on the quality criteria. The four countries identified (UK, US, Canada and Australia) seem to have the most interest in this area of research and they all have some form of age discrimination law.

The following chapter considers the thematic findings.

5 Thematic Findings

5.1 Introduction

The previous section presented the description of the core research papers that have been useful in the analysis. This section will present the major themes discovered in the studies that formed the systematic review, firstly by considering the literature on attracting older workers before moving on to the retention of older workers.

Analysis of a single group is an important issue because of the ways in which particular characteristics affecting attraction may vary by cohort and until research has been conducted we will not know conclusively if any differences exist between the different age groups.

The result could be that organisations are missing out on an increasing talent pool that has wider macro level implications (older workers make an enormous contribution to the workforce and bring economic and social benefits, as identified in the scoping study), so the key is to recruit these older workers by also making the workplace attractive to their needs.

5.2 Research Question 1

***RQ1:** How do employers make themselves attractive to older workers?*

With the few papers that have remained after sifting based on relevance and quality, it seems sensible to form themes emerging from the literature in order to suggest an answer to the question being posed (RQ1) on the attraction of older workers to an organisation. For this purpose, the human resources strategies that are especially important in attracting older workers (attraction strategies) will be identified and the starting point will be to consider flexible working because this has the most prevalent references in the literature, before moving on to the other suggestions, i.e. pension schemes and work characteristics.

Following this section the focus will be on the actual attraction process that an organisation undertakes: advertising the post and the interview. It should be reiterated that due to the very low amount of papers passing the sifting by means of the protocol, some of the research used to answer RQ1 was included due to the problem of limited numbers.

It is important to note here that RQ1 should be read from the perspective of the organisation (as opposed to the actual older worker). However, due to the small number of papers included in the review, suggestions and findings from the older worker perspective have also been referred to. It is deemed important to gather as much information about this topic as possible in order to understand the area better so that it is possible to identify the research gap for further study. More precisely, it will ensure adequate coverage of the very limited literature.

5.2.1 Attraction Strategies

The focus of this section will be twofold: firstly to identify the attraction strategies that research has shown to influence the decision of the older worker to apply to an organisation and secondly to identify the measures used by the organisation to make themselves attractive to older workers.

5.2.1.1 Flexible working

The term flexibility can mean very different things to different people and according to Doverspike, Taylor, Shultz and McKay (2000), a flexible workplace might be one that is able to adapt to new requirements of an ageing workforce “where employees have control over the time and number of hours worked. Maintaining flexibility in the number of hours worked seems to be a critical component in the success of most recruitment programmes aimed at older adults, regardless of the type of work involved or whether the company is pursuing workers internally or in the outside market” (Doverspike et al., 2000, p.449).

Koc-Menard (2009) explored how organisations might address their talent shortage by introducing flexible work programmes to attract and retain older workers. The business case for employing older workers (for example, experience, knowledge, skills) means that many employers do find it attractive to employ older workers and as a result this should become a key human resource priority. Accordingly, Koc-Menard suggests a 'best practice' of applying a portfolio approach to be implemented. Here the organisations are to design programmes that utilise a multitude of work flexibility that consists of work schedules (for example, flexible hours or shorter work weeks), number of work hours (for example, part-time or job sharing), location of work (for example, working from home or other off-site location), and job responsibilities (for example, changing jobs or actual career).

In order to recruit these older workers, a strategy is to create conditions that are of preference to older workers. Koc-Menard argues that a crucial factor is that of workplace flexibility, as older workers who do wish to extend their working life do not want to do so by working the traditional 40-hour week. The point here is to establish dual benefits that will help the corporate objective as well as fitting in with the older workers' competencies and preferences. While these suggestions seem sensible, they have not been proved here through means of empirical research but instead are the conclusions drawn by literature reviews.

This notion of flexible work arrangements (and part-time work in particular) has been mentioned in earlier literature as a way of increasing the participation of older workers, e.g. "a flexible work environment and part-time work have been shown to be attractive to retirees and potential retirees" (Andrews, 1992, p.58). Andrews continues by saying that despite the interest, retirees may be in search of a work situation that does not really exist. However, due to the current global financial crisis older workers have to continue to work to improve their retirement funds and the labour market has had to make changes to control costs (Mountford, 2010). Again, at 61%, flexible working is found to be the single most important factor for attracting older workers.

This is supported by empirical evidence through a sample of 120 retirees (with an average age of 62.18 years) when Rau and Adams (2005) identified that there was more attraction to organisations when the possibility of part-time and flexible work

hours were specified than when they were not. However, by these authors' admission, the sample size of their study was small so the degree of generalisability is limited. Doverspike et al., (2000) also support the notion of flexible working and suggest that it is a crucial component in the recruitment of older workers regardless of the type of work involved. Judging by this, it seems reasonable to propose that flexible working is a significant attracting factor to an organisation for the older worker. Andrews (1992, p.58) states "the most likely way to increase the participation of older individuals in the labour force is through part-time flexible work arrangements". The literature suggests that organisations do seem to realise that this is a way of making themselves attractive (Doverspike et al. (2000).

The gradual ageing and retiring of the baby boomers⁵ along with insufficient replacement by entrants into the workforce has contributed to the decline in traditional age workers. One of the strategies suggested to attract the required skills is that of bridge employment by recruiting older workers after they have retired. Rau and Adams (2005) argue that older adults are likely to have different objectives and motivations for their participation in work than younger adults. It is, therefore, this understanding of the factors that influence attraction that is crucial in helping organisations to succeed in targeting older workers in recruitment. In their study of 120 older workers on the impact of organisational policies on applicant attraction, Rau and Adams (2005) identified that this group was more attracted to an organisation when it indicated through advertisement that the opportunity for part-time and flexible work hours existed than when it did not. However, their study was not without its own limitations, namely the sample size which was relatively small ($n=120$) and the respondents of the study all worked for the same university therefore what they believe attracts them to an organisation might be comparatively similar since they worked for the same organisation.

The next section considers pension schemes as a way for an organisation to attract older workers.

⁵ Generally regarded as someone who was born after WWII i.e. from 1946, although the actual date of when the baby boom era stopped is controversial.

5.2.1.2 Pension Schemes

The literature debate regarding the significance of pension schemes seems to be conflicting. A study conducted by Taylor and Earnshaw (1995), identified that the primary objective for organisations' use of pension schemes seemed to be for retention purposes. While their survey of 66 private sector employers found the pension scheme useful in retaining employees, they also noted that a substantial majority of the employers actually believed that the pension schemes offered by the organisation were useful for both retention and recruitment purposes. Similarly, in Terry and White's (1997) study of 82 companies that offered their staff pension schemes, they found that a substantial number of respondents thought that these schemes had a positive impact on employee recruitment. However, when probed further on their evidence, only two respondents claimed to have supporting hard evidence for their assertion.

In a deviation from the above dominant approaches to find out whether or not pension schemes attracted older workers, Gough and Hick (2009) interviewed 36 managerial employees (rather than their employers) from both public and private sector organisations. The findings demonstrated that few believed the pension to be an important standalone characteristic influencing whether or not they decided to join an organisation. Where the pension did influence their decision, this was with regard to the pension scheme forming part of an overall package of benefits on offer. When asked if the pension scheme was an important factor, one participant of this study responded "No, because at that age you don't think of pension" (60-64, male, private-sector Senior Manager in Gough and Hick, 2009, p.163). They therefore concluded that the retention function of pensions is stronger than the recruitment function. However, Loretto et al. (2000) found that the offer of a pension ranked on a list of 20 items as the employees believed that this provision was either essential or very important in their decision to join the organisation.

The actual work being conducted is also a contributing factor to whether or not an older worker is attracted to apply to an organisation. This will be considered in the next section.

5.2.1.3 Work Characteristics

Research by Hayward and Grady (1986) examined the characteristics of occupations on the retention and recruitment rates of older male workers. For example, there are particular occupations that require a lot of strength, dexterity or quick reflexes but as certain capabilities are reduced with age; some occupations are likely to become unattractive to older workers. On the other hand, there are other occupations that may continue to be attractive to older workers, as they are still able to complete the work tasks. With regard to recruitment, Hayward and Grady found that older men could enter an occupation “from other occupations where the destination occupation is characterised by low levels of social skill, high growth, a high concentration of older workers past age 64 and a large gap in the earnings between younger and older workers” (1986, p.659). While this research does not focus on attraction to the organisation (instead looking at the attraction to a particular occupation) it does shed some light on the perceived suitability of the job and the fact that through promoting these characteristics, organisations can make themselves attractive to older workers.

5.2.2 The Attraction Process

The attraction process that an organisation uses to attract the older worker is an important tool in order to successfully achieve the goal of increasing the participation rates of this demographic group. According to the literature, there are two main parts of the recruitment cycle that have an influence on the perception of attraction by older workers to the organisation and that is through advertising and the interview, which are both considered below.

5.2.2.1 Advertising

Understanding how to attract and recruit older workers by means of appropriate advertising seems to be a theme that forms part of the literature. Doverspike et al., (2000) suggest that organisations need to understand the particular characteristics of older workers as they are significantly related to retirement behaviour. Therefore, attracting older workers is a unique process and not the same as the traditional means

of recruiting normally used to attract younger workers. For that reason, advertising strategies need to differ and it has been suggested (Doverspike et al., 2000) that advertising should consider the photographs used (for example; this should incorporate older employees), the actual content (for example; use phrases such as “experienced” or “mature” in the advertising to signal that past experience is valued) and the placement (for example; adult education centres or company retirees’ fairs or senior centres) since the usual advertising is designed to reach younger workers.

Sullivan and Duplaga (1997) also advocated that the look and placement of advertisements needed to be changed so that older workers were specifically encouraged to apply for positions within the organisation. They suggest that as evident from the growing number of age discrimination claims many older workers have faced some type of discrimination during hiring processes. Therefore clear signs that an organisation wants to recruit older workers are needed. Sullivan and Duplaga (1997) noted that many older workers are not actively seeking employment and so locating these ‘hidden applicants’ means that organisations would need to make a concerted effort to locate them (for example through posters placed in locations frequented by older individuals such as senior centres and libraries) and understand how they can be attracted – which this systematic review is seeking to address.

Rau and Adams (2005) also identified that the “general effect of the equal employment opportunity (EEO) statement targeted at older workers is to raise the level of attraction of older workers to the organisation (the exception being that a targeted EEO statement has only a small effect on attraction when either mentoring or flexible work arrangements (FWA) is in place without the other” (p.657). Therefore the proposition that having FWAs increases applicant attraction to the organisation is supported.

An article by Stack (1989) assessed the notion of hidden applicants that has been explored by organisations such as the Days Inn (hotel chain) who found that traditional recruitment methods did not work for attracting older workers as they were not actively seeking employment (which supports the suggestion by Sullivan and Duplaga, 1997) but would take up a position if it arose. Equally, older workers did not read “help wanted” advertisements because they did not believe companies were

seeking them out. The specific example of the Days Inn strategy to recruit older workers began when they started actively targeting older workers in 1988 following a huge ice storm in an area of the US that saw the only employees to report to work that day to be older workers with an attendance of 100%. This spurred the organisation to change their recruitment strategy and actively target older workers in order to increase their seniors' numbers. This was achieved through adopting measures, which included advertising in small neighbourhood newspapers, networking with civic centres and associations for older workers, in order to demonstrate their commitment to hiring this segment of the workforce.

The norm is for companies to focus their efforts on university recruitment activities as this is known to be the one location in which to find a greater number of younger potential entry level employees (Doverspike et al., 2000). This is classed as advertising as the employer will make themselves known to the students by promotion via the university. Doverspike et al. (2000) call for organisations to be more proactive in their recruitment quest by focusing on areas such as community colleges, which tends to attract a bigger pool of older students and also those associations involved with older individuals such as the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) in the US who often sponsor second-career fairs. This way, organisations can expose themselves and what they have to offer to the older worker.

5.2.2.2 The Interview

Doverspike et al. (2000) found a major concern for older workers re-entering the labour market to be the potential for age discrimination and negative stereotypes, which is beyond the scope of this systematic review. However, employers can try to address any negative beliefs about older workers. The suggestion is that the interview content (questions in the process), choice of interviewer and description of the company that is provided can all work towards ensuring that attraction is possible. For example, when describing the company to the older worker during the interview, those aspects of the job that they may find most appealing should be highlighted. Doverspike et al. (2000) contend that such attempts in tailoring interviews for older workers are positive moves in making the applicant feel that the organisation is accepting and will not tolerate discrimination.

5.2.3 Summary for RQ1

In conclusion, from the volume and quality of the literature on the attraction of older workers, it seems that we do not possess substantial knowledge about how to attract older workers. While literature exists on how to attract individuals to an organisation, there does not seem to be a focus on the differences that might exist for the attraction of older workers specifically, hence the difficulty in finding research that was relevant in answering RQ1. Part of the difficulty stemmed from the fact that some of the research was not solely about older workers but referred to this group in some other capacity.

The most cited suggestion for organisations to make themselves attractive to the older worker is through the policies and procedures that can be implemented, with flexible working being the single most important strategy at the forefront of these proposals. The actual characteristics of the job in terms of physical requirements would be relevant to an individual as they become older but such suggestions seem obvious and anecdotal without the empirical evidence that is required.

The process of attracting the older worker specifically has also received little attention as most of the literature will provide empirical evidence on the processes that are successful in attracting workers but whether or not this applies to all age groups is yet to be determined.

Many gaps exist in the literature on attracting older workers to the organisation and there is a sense that this group of people is being considered as a homogenous group when in fact there is diversity within. The most obvious is that of gender because the experiences of women and men within the employment sphere is well documented as being dissimilar and this has not been taken into account from the literature examined for this systematic review.

Armstrong-Stassen (2006) argues that those human resource practices that are succeeding in the retention of older workers are also possibly likely to be valuable in attracting older workers to the organisation. To see if that argument is plausible, this

systematic review will consider the literature on the retention of older workers to the organisation, in order to address the second review question (RQ2), in the section that follows.

5.3 Research Question 2

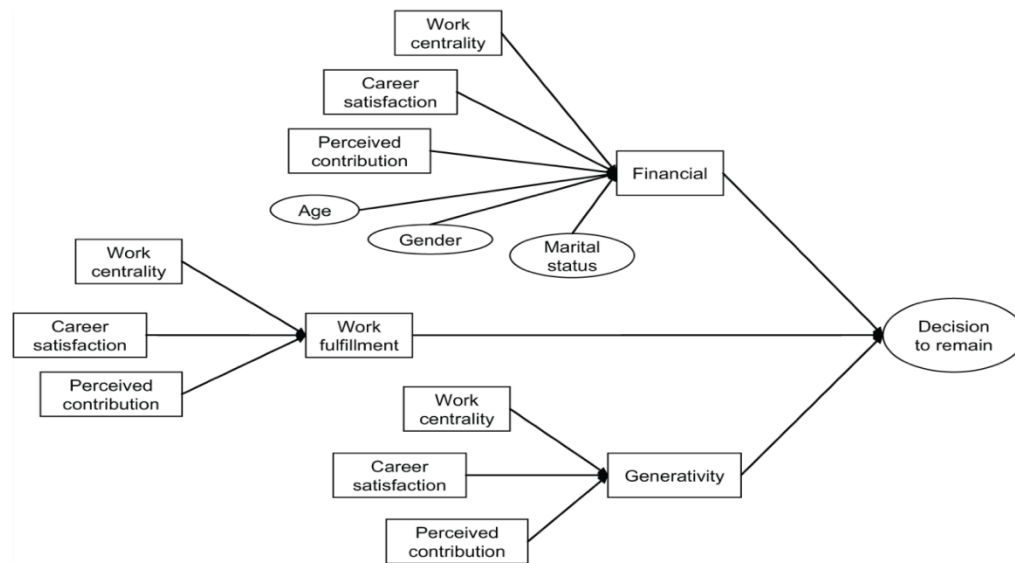
RQ2: How can employers retain older workers?

Older workers can either choose to remain in the organisation, move on to another organisation or retire. While the literature pertaining to the attraction of older workers has been sparse, the existing knowledge on the retention of older workers is also quite limited. However, this area is now receiving growing awareness (Templer, Armstrong-Stassen and Cattaneo, 2010). Although there is emphasis placed on the importance of older workers in the workforce, little is known about the way in which the attitudes, policies and practices of employers influence the retention of these older workers according to Loretto and White (2006).

The number of papers reviewed was small but they were all strictly chosen as a result of the criteria for quality and relevance to answering RQ2. This section will focus on how employers can retain older workers and, as per the first review question; the findings will be discussed according to the different themes as they have been presented in the literature. The themes are: bridge employment; financial matters; consultation and communication; training, learning and development; generativity, flexible working; recognition; workload; organisational and employer factors; the exchange relationship and gender differences.

Figure 5-1 is a representation by Templer et al., (2010) of the various antecedents that form the motives behind older workers' decision to continue working. The model also provides a basic visual illustration of themes found from other studies that assist in the retention of older workers and as such the antecedents will be assessed in more detail under the relevant sections.

Figure 5-1 Conceptual model of the factors affecting the decision to continue working. (Templer, Armstrong-Stassen and Cattaneo 2010, p.481).



5.3.1 Financial Matters

A large number of authors suggested that the retention of older workers was related to financial issues. Some of these authors found a number of different motivational factors in their study that also related to the retention of older workers and their findings (other than financial matters) will be separated and discussed under the appropriate sections.

In an attempt to identify the demographic and work-related antecedents of the motives behind older workers decision to continue in work, Templer et al., (2010) conducted a cross-sectional study with three groups of respondents aged 50-70 years: those in career jobs ($n = 395$), those in a bridge job ($n = 195$) and the self-employed ($n = 174$). Their study focused on three motives identified as important for older workers to continue working: financial necessity, work fulfilment (section 5.3.2) and generativity (section 5.3.3). The financial motive includes a lack of financial resources meaning that the older worker cannot afford to retire, as depicted in Figure 5-1.

The financial results found that for those in their career jobs, women were more likely to continue working than men. For bridge job respondents, age, gender and marital

status were significant predictors of the financial motive as they found that younger respondents, women and singles were more likely to be motivated due to financial reasons than older respondents, men and those married. However, for those who were self-employed, none of the demographic variables was a significant predictor of the financial motive for them to continue to work.

Templer et al.'s (2010) study has shown that older workers are not necessarily a homogenous group and that age, gender and marital status could mediate the power of financial rewards. As with most studies into what motivates older workers to continue to work, the study relied upon self-reported information, which means that the findings are based on the accuracy of respondents being able to recall their own motives or their perception of the reasons that were most important in influencing them to continue to work. These reasons could also be time dependent, in the sense that they change over time. The respondents were presented with a list from which they indicated the importance for remaining in work, therefore it is possible that the list was not exhaustive and there could be unidentified reasons that may be more important in determining the retention of older workers than those reasons presented in the study.

The marital status of the respondents did not take into account the varying living arrangements that individuals now experience which may have had an impact on the results of this study. Lastly, the data were collected before the current economic downturn, therefore if those data were collected now there could be more significance attached to the financial motives behind the older workers' decision to remain in the workforce.

In a small-scale study of sixteen older Australians (eight males and eight females with a mean age of 67 years), Fraser, McKenna, Turpin, Allen and Liddle (2009) also created a list of the reasons these older workers remained in paid employment. They found that earning an income was perceived to be the most important reason to continue working. However, they also found that there was no consistency between what was regarded as a benefit of paid employment and what was perceived as a reason to remain in paid employment. Further, the financial incentive alone did not encourage older workers to remain in employment since the reported benefits from

working (for example, having something to do/keeping busy, having a purpose and making a contribution) were also useful in understanding the types of workplace that older workers value which subsequently has implications for whether or not they remain.

There are limitations to this study, which only included the age of the respondents, whose ages ranged from 60 to 75 years, meaning that there was no consideration of those older workers between 50 and 60 years which could have changed the results. The sample size is also very small so the results may not be generalisable beyond the suburbs of Brisbane, Australia where the study was conducted.

The financial necessity for older workers to continue to work was also assessed by Andrews, Manthorpe and Watson (2005) who argued that because many nurses in their study took career breaks and embarked on periods of working part-time or only occasionally, the resulting reduced/non-contribution to pension schemes may influence their retirement behaviour in the sense that they were compelled to continue working for financial purposes.

Armstrong-Stassen (2008) compared people aged 50 to 65 years who had retired and returned to work ($n = 90$), who remained in their career jobs ($n = 198$), and who retired and remained out of the workforce ($n = 321$) and their influences to stay in work. The participants were members of Canada's Association for the Fifty Plus (CARP). For the purpose of specifically addressing RQ2, only the findings for the working retired/post retired and the career job respondents will be considered. The results of the study found that there was no significant difference between those organisations that employed the working retired and the organisations that employed older workers in career jobs for industry sector, organisation size, location, age mix of the organisation and work group and age of immediate supervisor. However, the improvement of pension planning within an organisation was found to be significantly more important in influencing the decision of those in career jobs to remain at work than for the working retired.

5.3.1.1 Pension Schemes

The pension research on retention simultaneously investigates its relationship with recruitment, and this is why several papers used to answer RQ1 were also relevant to answering RQ2, for example the following two studies: Taylor and Earnshaw's (1995) survey of 66 private sector employers found that the retention of employees was the most important role of pension schemes but the majority of employers thought that pension schemes were useful for both the recruitment and the retention of older workers. There are contradictions to this evidence however as Terry and White (1997) identified key shortcomings from such research, for example, that while these managers believed the provision of pension schemes facilitated employee recruitment and retention, there was no actual evidence to support this.

Gough and Hick's (2009) study identified that the provision of a pension was viewed as part of an overall package of benefits rather than a standalone reason to remain with an organisation. In other words while occupational pension schemes were not the deciding factor in taking the job it was a motivating reason to stay with the employer. Their evidence also suggests that views of the pension schemes were related to the age of the worker in the sense that older workers may not have considered the scheme when they joined the organisation years previously but it became a serious factor, as they got older. "Thus, while occupational pensions are not at the forefront of the factor influencing early career decisions, increased emphasis on financially planning for the future among older workers makes them of considerable importance for many older employees" (p.164).

These authors have found that financial matters play a part in the retention of older workers. An interesting point is the level of importance this plays once the older workers are not considered as a homogenous group and the diversity in the group is taken into account.

5.3.2 Work Fulfilment

The work fulfilment motive refers to the fulfilment derived from working (enjoyment of work and sense of achievement). Templer et al., (2010) also found that the personal fulfilment reasons for continuing to work for career job respondents for whom working was important, who had satisfying careers and who felt their contribution was valued, were significantly more likely to continue to work due to these work fulfilment reasons than their counterparts who did not view their career in the same way. For bridge job respondents, the three work-related variables (work centrality, career satisfaction and perceived contribution, as per Figure 5-1) were also significant predictors of work fulfilment motives. The self-employed respondents, for whom working was an important aspect and who found reward in running their own business, were more likely to be motivated to continue working due to this fulfilment derived from their work than their counterparts.

5.3.3 Generativity

The generativity motive refers to having the opportunity to share knowledge and experience with younger generations (Templer et al., 2010). The results of Templer et al. with regard to generativity as a reason for older workers continuing to work found that career job respondents who indicated the three work-related variables (work centrality, career satisfaction and perceived contribution as per Figure 5-1) to be important, were significantly more likely to continue working in order to pass on their knowledge, experience and expertise to younger generations than their counterparts. The same was found for bridge job respondents and the self-employed respondents.

The need to pass on acquired wisdom and knowledge was a theme brought out in the study by Leurer, Donnelly and Domm (2007) as the older nurses wanted to assist the new graduates in the nursing profession. However, the older nurses felt that due to other issues, for example, heavy workloads, there was inadequate time for the sharing of knowledge and experience that was viewed to be necessary.

The training, learning and development findings (section 5.3.5) will also indicate that the uptake of educational opportunities could have relevance for the generativity motive in the sense that these older workers may feel more knowledgeable through the updating of their skills as a result and want to pass this on to the younger entrants into their profession, which could also have implications for addressing skill shortages.

5.3.4 Bridge Employment

A bridge job is “a position that occurs after a career position, but could still be with the original career employer in a different bridging appointment” (Templer et al., 2010, p.482). In other words, the bridge job refers to work following a career job but before retirement and therefore bridges the gap between work and retirement.

Pillay, Kelly and Tones (2010) proposed that bridge employment could be more than a way to help older workers adjust to retirement and instead be used as a “transitional employment” (TE) phase that could extend employment years beyond official retirement years. Therefore TE could assist in giving older workers a strategic human resources learning and development plan that would include an alternative career plan as opposed to simply gradual retirement. As a result employers would be able to retain older workers for a longer time.

A study conducted by Feldman and Seongsu (2000), using survey results from 371 older workers, identified that those employees who were participating in bridge employment with the same employer felt marginalised, often considered they were prevented from the daily decision-making activities and felt that the quality of their work assignments declined as a result. This was in contrast to those older workers who found bridge employment with new employers. The authors identified a number of reasons why bridge employment in a different organisation was more rewarding which included being given the ‘star’ treatment by the new employer and an increased income. Therefore the researchers concluded that bridge roles must challenge and reward those who engage in them.

5.3.5 Training, Learning and Development

Training, learning and development can play a vital role in making a workplace appealing to older workers and therefore influence their decision to stay in employment. However, training is seen to be a contentious issue since older workers are either considered to be far less likely to have access to training and development than younger workers or that they themselves do not wish to participate. This will be revealed by the studies in this section.

A retention theme articulated by the older nurses in the Leurer et al., (2007) study was the need for improved educational opportunities. They desired systematic access to further development and called for such policies to be implemented in the health care system so that the older nurses could be motivated to stay in work. These older nurses “revealed a propensity toward lifelong learning, a desire for systematic access to professional development and a perceived current lack of opportunities to update their nursing skills” (Leurer et al., 2007, p.317). This investment in educational opportunities for the older nurses could assist them in obtaining higher expertise which they could then share with the younger graduate nurses. However, since this study was only conducted on nurses, the findings may not be relevant to other employment groups.

Armstrong-Stassen and Templer (2005) found that corporate training was important in the retention of managerial and professional employees according to 83% of HR executives. However, there was a disparity between how significant these practices were seen to retain older workers and the extent to which these organisations were actually engaging in practice that can be understood further from the study below.

A study by Armstrong-Stassen and Schlosser (2007) used questionnaires for 395 older workers in their career job and 195 who were employed in a bridge job, to assess the relationship between the older workers’ tendency to be involved in development activities in terms of being able to acquire new knowledge and skills (development orientation), how they viewed the development opportunities of the job (job development climate), their commitment to the organisation and their intention to stay

with the employer. They found that those older workers who were more inclined to be involved with development activities believed their jobs provided more development opportunities. This increased their commitment to the organisation and their intention to remain was therefore higher than those who did not pursue development activities and as a result did not believe their job provided development opportunities. The findings of this study also suggested that employers could retain older workers by promoting personal development and providing adequate opportunities to learn new knowledge and skills. However, the provision of development opportunities would not be utilised by all older workers as it is most appropriate for those who see their work as an important aspect, who are employed full-time and need to work for financial reasons, when compared with those with low work centrality, specifically those in part-time jobs and not financially dependent on their job.

The differences between career job and bridge job respondents found by Armstrong-Stassen and Schlosser (2007) were that the latter engaged less in development opportunities but were more likely to believe their job offered fewer development opportunities. The rationale offered was that the bridge job respondents were on average older than the career job respondents so had already left their long-term career job, which could have made them less motivated to pursue development activities. While this research did not treat the older workers as a homogenous group (separating those in career jobs from those in bridge jobs), all of the data were collected from a single source, Canada's Association for the Fifty Plus (CARP), which used a single method. Researchers could in future conduct a field experiment in which some organisations implemented greater job development opportunities that could be compared with other organisations that did not implement such a programme.

At the beginning of any career, education and training is usually concentrated but continuous learning is becoming more important for the retention of older workers according to the results presented by Armstrong-Stassen (2008) from the CARP respondents. Towards the end of their career, training may enable older workers to exit from physically demanding jobs through the development of new skills for an alternative job. Therefore, training in this sense can equip the older worker with the necessary skill to compete to remain in the workforce.

In their focus group of 40 participants as ‘employers’ who discussed the older workers in the Scottish labour market and all phases of the employment cycle, Loretto and White (2006) looked at the divergence between policy and practice to see if these practices were influenced either through direct experience or general stereotypical attitudes. For the purpose of addressing RQ2, only the results that pertain to training are useful from their study. They identified that all but one employer claimed that their organisation had no upper age bar to training but the main reasons put forward for not having a restriction were due mostly to external considerations such as industry requirement or the Investors in People Standard.

The one employer with an age restriction to training of 60 years explained that this was due to their experience within that organisation that the older workers did not take to training very well. The study relied upon self-reporting by its participants, which could be a limitation because employers might be reluctant to publicly admit to having a lack of HR policy and practice within a focus group. Loretto and White (2006) concluded that for practices to change there needs to be a focus on changing attitudes but it is unclear how attitudes should be changed by these employers.

What is noted here are that the steps, which employers take to strengthen the development of older workers, are important in fostering commitment and intention to remain. However, these studies have shown that a disparity exists between the training, learning and development of older workers, and the policies and practices of the organisation.

5.3.6 Consultation and Communication

As stated in the section above, it is not only financial incentives which determine the retention of older workers in the organisation, as other authors have found that cheaper, more basic strategies can be implemented. For example, Leurer et al. (2007), conducted semi-structured interviews with 16 Registered Nurses regarding the initiatives they believed would assist in the retention of experienced nurses. Consultation and communication was identified as an area to be improved so that

nurses were consulted regarding changes taking place in the health care system. The belief being that the advice given by experienced nurses was not incorporated into the health care change plans. The other six themes of retention that emerged from their study will be addressed in other more appropriate sections.

This study, however, was not without its limitations; firstly there were only 16 respondents from a health region in western Canada so the findings may not be generalisable to other groups. Secondly the age range of participants ranged from 41 to 66 years, therefore strictly speaking some of the respondents did not fall within this paper's definition of the older worker (i.e. aged 50 and above) but were included because the average age was 49 years old and also because there is conflict regarding the age of an 'older worker'.

5.3.7 Flexible Working

Most authors highlighted the importance of flexible working for the retention of older workers. Getting the right level of work-life balance is a key issue; from the employee perspective, higher levels of job satisfaction and organisational commitment are found with employers who are supportive. From the employer perspective, a more satisfactory balance between an employee's work and life leads to organisational effectiveness and high performance. Shacklock, Brunetto and Nelson (2009) in their questionnaire survey of older workers in public sector organisations in Australia found there to be consensus that older workers want flexibility in their work arrangements in order for them to continue working, yet less than 10% of employers have reported the introduction of flexible working arrangements. However, they noted that these flexible work arrangements and their subsequent influence on the intention of older workers to continue working are still under-researched.

Examples of flexible work options include: the amount of time spent at work (part-time employment or part-year schedules), job sharing or telecommuting and such alternative arrangements are more desired by older workers as they meet the needs of their work-life balance (Armstrong-Stassen et al., 2009). Leurer et al. (2007) in their study also found that flexible working was desired by older nurses, mainly because

nurses have been reported to have the highest levels of workplace stress of any age group due to the complexity of trying to sustain work-life and family life. Therefore strategies that assist in balancing the work-life commitment will have a positive impact.

Research on nurses that have caring responsibilities has found that they are more likely to be in part-time employment since women are more likely to be carers than men. This has significant gender implications (Andrews et al., 2005). For example, part-time working results in reduced contributions to pension schemes, which may compel older women to continue to work for longer than men.

Armstrong-Stassen (2008) found only two significant differences between the working retired and the career job respondents and this related to flexible working options and compensation. The working retired respondents reported that the provision of flexible work schedules, training and development, job design options, recognition and respect compensation options, and retirement options were significantly more important in influencing their decision to remain at work than they were in influencing those respondents in career jobs. This is supported through empirical evidence by Kemelgor and Meek (2008), as they found that those organisations, which offer high levels of flexibility, also had higher levels of employee retention. Therefore flexible working is preferred by older workers and seems to be the most popular strategy when organisations wish to retain older workers.

5.3.8 Recognition

The nurses in Leurer et al.'s (2007) study cited recognition for their efforts as a retention strategy they would recommend to policy makers. They felt that even small symbolic tokens or gestures would be of value to the workers. Amongst the retention strategies, both formal and informal recognition could be comparatively inexpensive for an organisation to implement. All the respondents in Armstrong-Stassen's (2008) study rated recognition; respect and fair performance evaluation procedures as possessing the most weight towards their decision to remain in or return to work.

While the effect of recognition has not featured as a prominent way to retain older workers, it does seem to play a supportive role to other methods that organisations can adopt to retain older workers.

5.3.9 Workload

Leurer et al.'s (2007) study identified the workload for older nurses to be an issue since it was said to be heavier at the time of the study, as compared to earlier in their careers. This posed a particular difficulty since the nurses themselves were starting to feel the effects of ageing. The older nurses felt that the patient to nurse ratios would need to be improved in order to retain the older nurses in the health care system. However, this workload pressure may be specific to the nursing profession.

Contradictory to findings regarding the workload of the nurses in the study above, Buyens, Van Dijk, Dewilde and De Vos (2009) in their study of 266 employers and 1,290 older workers via questionnaires found that the older workers did not prefer to reduce their workload or responsibilities. They also found that the hierarchical level of the employee had a positive correlation to their career expanding preferences. More specifically, older workers who are low on the hierarchical level prefer to reduce the role of work in their life, instead preferring to spend time with family and friends. The issue of workload was not represented in many of the studies and may be more relevant to the nurses who participated in the study due to the physical nature of their job. The participants of this study were defined as an older worker if they were 40 years or older, while this paper has defined older workers as being 50 years or older. Although the findings have been reported here, it should be noted that the younger definition of an older worker could have affected the findings of the study.

5.3.10 Organisational and Employer Factors

Shacklock et al., (2009) examined the impact of work-related factors on older workers' intention to continue working and found that human resource management policies tended to encourage older employees to retire early and that the

organisations' policies, practices and management with respect to older workers also had an impact on their retirement decisions instead of assisting them to remain with the organisation.

Armstrong-Stassen's (2008) study found that for both the working retired and career job respondents there was a significant gap between the importance of HR practices used to influence their decision to remain and the extent to which the organisations were engaged in those HR practices. The largest gaps for both the working retired and the career job respondents were for compensation options and pre- and post-retirement options, with the working retired experiencing the smallest discrepancies.

The study suggested that the differences between the working retired and the career job respondents were linked to employment practices within organisations and were not related to the characteristics of the actual organisation. However, a limitation of the study stems from the fact that differences between respondents may not have been identified because of the relatively small number in the working retired group (90 participants) compared to those in their career jobs (198 participants).

Due to the health care restructuring in the 1990s, the older nurses in Leurer et al.'s (2007) study believed there to be a lack of support from management. Pre-restructuring, there were front-line managers who had the authority to make unit level decisions that were specific to the front-line staff of that unit, therefore making the working conditions suitable for staff. The respondents believed that a return to this structure would assist in retaining older nurses.

Organisations that actively support a positive work environment and value their employees' contributions are better able to demonstrate the idea that their employees are seen as a valuable resource (Kemelgor and Meek, 2008). In their study of 47 high-growth small firms in which they sought to examine the topic of retention, Kemelgor and Meek (2008) also found support for higher levels of retention amongst those companies that provide frequent feedback and clear expectations.

A similar argument for organisational and employer factors can be presented as that of communication and consultation (section 5.3.5), and recognition (section 5.2.8).

This is in terms of organisations needing to utilise various strategies to ensure the retention of older workers, which includes the more complex and costly strategies, as well as simple more basic changes that are easier and fast to implement.

5.3.11 The Exchange Relationship

Claes and Heyman (2008) in their focus group study of 15 participants advocated a focus on retention practices focusing on the person-organisation exchange (this refers to the reciprocal nature of the employer/employee relationship) and regarded older workers as proactive in the interaction. They argue that ideally any retention practices that are introduced should be specific to the particular older worker, which is not possible.

Consistent with social exchange theory and the norm of reciprocity “respondents who perceived their organisation valued their contribution and cared about their well-being expressed higher levels of satisfaction with their career and a greater intent to stay than those who received little organisation support” Armstrong-Stassen and Ursel (2009, p.213). Although a major theme in the literature regarding older workers is that of flexible working, they did not find significant support for this model in terms of a link between the flexible work and organisational support. Their study relied upon the respondent’s perceptions of the HR practices in place, which may not actually reflect the practices of the organisation.

5.3.12 Gender Differences

Most of the studies treated older workers homogenously and did not consider how gender differences might impact on retention. However, a study by Shacklock et al., (2009) identified differences between men and women. For example, the work-related factors that were of particular significance to women included interpersonal relationships, autonomy, flexibility and interests outside of the workplace. Conversely for men, the work-related factors that were significant included the importance of work and interests outside of work. They concluded that the same factors that impact on the decision to retire also impact on the decision of older workers to continue to

work. Shacklock et al. (2009) found that, irrespective of gender, the interests outside of work will impact on retention and while the organisation can have little effect on such interests, they can influence the older worker to continue to work.

The results for males suggest that the importance of their work could be significant enough to encourage them to continue work. For females, the results suggest that the organisation can be of influence by increasing personal autonomy and flexibility at work as well as supporting the development of personal relationships.

5.3.13 Summary for RQ2

For the retention of older workers, the themes identified do show a degree of congruence amongst the authors regarding the factors that would assist organisations' retention strategies. Some of these papers highlighted that amongst those organisations with clear policies and procedures in place that would seem to work in retaining older workers, these may be present due to the demand for organisations to comply with particular external incentives (for example through regulation or Investors in People). This creates a gap between documented policies and procedures and what is being done in practice.

The themes discovered through this review for retaining older workers varied from: bridge employment; financial; work fulfilment; generativity; training, learning and development; consultation and communication; flexible working; recognition; workload; organisational and employer factors. Whether an organisation needs to introduce all of these themes, some, most or even other themes is dependent upon a great number of issues since the most relevant themes are context-dependent for that particular organisation. Organisations and individuals within are unique, so a 'one size fits all' approach cannot be adopted for every organisation.

While the majority of papers, both academic and practitioner, introduce statistics on the mass retirement of the baby boom generation, therefore recognising that there is a potential need to retain older workers, little is still known precisely about what would motivate them to remain in the organisation (Buyens et al., 2009). Even some of the

employers who took part in the various studies have not really started to implement retention measures for their organisation according to Buyens et al. (2009). One reason for this inaction is considered to be that organisations do not know how to retain older workers.

The challenge identified from the findings above suggests that organisations are tasked to close the gap that currently exists between the practices that are necessary to retain older workers and the extent to which those practices are being implemented. For example, training has been highlighted as one factor that affects the retention of older workers. However, improving access to training opportunities will not prove to be effective if inappropriate training methods continue. Therefore in the light of this, it is vital that training methods are suitable to the learning preferences of older workers.

Regardless of the future workforce demographics, employers need to measure the contributions that older workers can make to their organisation which complement rather than compete with those offered by younger workers. Therefore employers need to develop new strategies that will encourage older workers to remain in or return to the workforce.

6 Discussion

6.1 Introduction

The preceding sections reported the findings ascertained through a methodical review of the 31 selected papers. This was accomplished by the presentation of work by different authors in the research area of older workers and attraction (recruitment) and older workers and retention. This provided the evidence that is necessary to answer the two review questions that were formulated at the end of Chapter 2.

The section that follows is a discussion of the review on the subject of what we know about the attraction and retention of older workers, what we do not know and the implications for further research.

6.2 What do we know about attracting older workers?

The findings of this systematic review have not revealed much about how employers make themselves attractive to older workers simply because most of the research identified has been anecdotal or conceptual and while the statistics from Chapter 4 may show a balance between the empirical and conceptual papers they do not reflect the quality issues of the studies that were encountered. Most of the findings that were used in the systematic review could not be generalised to the wider workforce due to the specific nature of the study (e.g. in the nursing profession) or the limited number of participants involved.

In the main, we know that older workers are attracted to organisations that will allow them to decelerate their lives, whether this is due to their obligation and necessity to continue working for longer and therefore find new employment, or through active decision-making to continue to work. The most cited measure in the literature, that attracts older workers, has been argued to be flexible working, which can be in many different forms, for example, reduced working hours or days and job sharing.

While there is belief on the side of employers regarding what they should be doing to attract the older worker, in most instances this is not supported by any evidence. This assertion without evidence could be seen from the studies conducted on pension schemes as a way of attracting older workers. Although some employers have realised that while the pension scheme could be a factor in attracting older workers, it must be embedded as part of a larger package of benefits. There is also a debate around the strength of the pension scheme as it relates to recruitment or retention and in which area it is strongest.

As individuals age there seems to be an obvious link to the type of jobs that attracts them. Obvious in the sense that this applies to jobs where there is a physical requirement and as certain capabilities reduce with age these jobs become less attractive. Therefore, employers might have a more difficult time attracting older workers into such roles but there should also be awareness that the ageing process is an individual experience and not all older workers will experience a reduction in physical capabilities at the same time.

The recruitment processes such as the interview stage with the employer is significant in forming the attraction since the content (questions in the interview) and even the interviewer themselves all act as means of attracting the older applicant. Attracting older workers through advertising has also been argued to be a unique process and not the same as the traditional methods of recruiting that are typically used to attract younger workers (Doverspike et al., 2000). This is an apt concluding point, as most research does not seem to take this assertion into consideration.

6.3 What do we know about retaining older workers?

The number of papers included in this systematic review for RQ2 is not much more than that of RQ1; however, there was a marked difference in the empirical evidence. Studies have demonstrated that particular antecedents can be introduced by the employer in order to retain older workers. Financial motivations are considered to be important but, like the motives mentioned for RQ1, they are not considered to be

standalone incentives. This is the same as the findings for pension schemes, which are considered to be part of an overall package.

Flexible working is argued to assist in the retention of older workers for similar reasons to that of attracting older workers, as the need to decelerate the pace of life becomes increasingly important to older workers. Workload was also cited as a retention tool, although contradictory findings exist as to whether or not older workers do want to reduce their workload.

Interestingly, there were also intangible motivators for retaining older workers that included generativity aims and work fulfilment. Contrary to other studies, training, learning and development were viewed positively by older workers who attributed this to having an employer that valued older workers, therefore once the skills were learnt they wanted to return this knowledge through assisting younger workers. Consultation and communication, as well as recognition, were identified as other measures to retain older workers and it is possible that these non-pecuniary inducements are more important for retention than pecuniary measures. Overall, the human resources policies and practices adopted by the employer mediated the decision to remain in employment.

It is also known that gender differences for the older workers have an impact on retention (Shacklock et al., 2009) but apart from this distinction, older workers are usually considered as a homogenous group. The next section considers what we do not know and the implications for further research.

6.4 What we do not know: implications for further research

This section will suggest areas in which further research can be conducted.

6.4.1 Attracting older workers

As many gaps exist within the attraction of older workers' literature, the simple suggestion could be to duplicate most of the recruitment studies that have been

conducted with the focus on younger workers replaced with the focus on older workers as the participants. Similarly, while the limited number of retention literature has included older workers specifically, it is only with consideration of older workers already in the organisation and not on the attraction of additional older workers.

Gender has been the only diversity recognised within the group of older workers but other forms of diversity such as ethnicity could also yield interesting results. Or ethnicity and gender could be investigated together to see how they potentially mediate the perceived attraction.

The nursing industry seem to be the most interested in the attraction of older workers, in part because they are acknowledging their ageing workforce; however, it would be interesting to see how this compares to the Banking, IT or Manufacturing industries. Similarly, geography has not featured in any of the studies but it would also be interesting to investigate the variance of attraction of older workers between countries.

6.4.2 Retaining older workers

There exist several gaps in the literature that may warrant research on the retention of older workers. The few studies that have examined the motives of older workers to continue to work have mainly been descriptive in nature, in terms of highlighting ranked percentages of the reasons that older workers have identified for remaining in work. Therefore, it is suggested that more longitudinal studies are required to reveal any possible differences between the attraction to an organisation and reasons for remaining in the workforce, as it is perceived over time that other factors could affect their perceptions.

To date, most of the research has treated older workers as a homogenous group but the diversity that exists within this group requires concentration and attention. Therefore, the similarities and differences should be studied as it could reveal important issues for assisting in attracting and retaining this group.

Further research needs to assess the effectiveness of specific retention strategies. From the research above, there seems to be specific motives to remain in an organisation being highlighted by the participants but it can be argued that they are relevant only to the specific occupation in which they work.

Overall, there seems to be a gap between all the many strategies, which the organisation can utilise in the retention of older workers and exactly how they can achieve this in the practical sense.

6.4.3 Possible question for further research

As stated above there are a number of areas in which to conduct further research; however, for the purpose of developing a research question suitable to pursue a PhD, the conclusion is to suggest a comparative study – more specifically, to find out the differences and similarities in the attraction of younger and older workers to an organisation. Studies that have focused on younger workers face the criticism of generalisability to the rest of the workforce and more specifically to older workers. Therefore, on this basis, the proposed research question is:

‘What attracts younger and older workers to an organisation?’

6.5 Limitations of the study

This research is not without limitations, which are discussed in turn. While there was scant literature on the attraction of older workers and to an even lesser extent on the retention of older workers, this systematic review was constrained by the papers from which one could work. The number of practitioner papers seem to be more relevant in this field of research (human resources) since, in general, practitioners have been far more proactive in conducting research on older workers than have academics.

It might therefore be useful to conduct a wider review to take into consideration these practitioner papers. This, in the author’s opinion, would be of greater use since the access that such organisations have to older workers and more specifically to other

organisations who are succeeding in recruiting and retaining older workers, could yield greater understanding about what we ‘know’ about the attraction and retention of older workers.

The initial scoping study identified literature on older workers, recruitment (attraction) and workforce diversity but at the end of the process, retention was considered to be a more appropriate direction to explore. However, due to time constraints there was no scoping of the retention literature, which is a limitation of this research.

The review only contained literature from journals and not any books, working papers, conference papers, reports or from personal requests from subject experts and practitioners as intended in the systematic review protocol, which is a further limitation.

While these limitations are acknowledged, every effort has been made to be as transparent as possible so that replication is achievable should the process be repeated.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Data Extraction Sheet

Date Extraction Sheet	
Details of publication	
Title	Employers' Responses to Demographic Changes in Rural Labour Markets: The Case of Dumfries and Galloway.
Author(s)	Emma Hollywood Ronald McQuaid
Source (journal/conference etc)	Local Economy
Year/volume/issue/pages/country of origin	2007, Vol. 22 Issue 2, p148-162, Scotland
Topic area	Declining workforce due to demographic changes (older workers)
Keywords	Labour market Demographic change Employers
Research question	
Aim	This paper examines how employers are adjusting to demographic changes in Dumfries and Galloway, a rural local authority in southwest Scotland.
Methodology	
Methods (empirical/theoretical, case study/survey, positivist/phenomenological, quantitative/qualitative etc)	. Empirical . Survey . Interviews
Sample size	50 employers
Type of organisation/sector	. Health and Social Work . Hotels and Catering . Manufacturing . Wholesale and Retail . Agriculture and Forestry
Thematic information	
Short abstract	Employers in many rural areas are facing the problem of a declining workforce due to demographic changes in the population. These demographic changes are a result of a combination of population ageing, the in-migration of mainly retired people, out-migration and low fertility rates. This paper examines how employers are adjusting to demographic changes in Dumfries and Galloway, a rural local authority in southwest Scotland. The area has one of the highest proportions of older people in the UK, and as such provides a useful insight into employers' responses to population ageing. Fifty locally based employers were questioned concerning the labour market impact of population ageing and their responses to this situation.

Main findings/suggested framework/results/conclusions	<p>. The paper argues that in order to ensure the medium-term economic viability of the local economy, employers will need a set of strategies both to attract workers to the area and to increase the participation and retention of older workers resident in the area.</p> <p>. Most of the employers stated that they would be willing to employ older workers but had difficulty attracting them (although few specifically made any efforts to target older people).</p> <p>. The response of many employers was to use migrant workers. Much controversy surrounds the use of migrant workers, particularly where it is perceived that they are taking jobs from the resident population.</p> <p>. The findings outlined here have shown that employers are largely positive about employing older workers but are unaware that the ageing of the workforce is likely to become an important issue for the labour market in Dumfries and Galloway. This highlights the need for greater local engagement with employers to increase their awareness of the ageing workforce and for them to utilise more fully the potential of older workers.</p>
Does it answer the RQ?	No
If so, in what way?	N/A
Participation in the study	
Characteristics of participants (age, sex, class, ethnicity, geographical location, health status, income status, other information)	<p>. Participants were located in Scotland</p> <p>. Employers interviewed ranged in size from very small employers to the Health Board with 4990 employees</p>
Recruitment/attraction procedures highlighted	<p>. One of the most significant responses by employers to labour shortages was the use of migrant workers from outside the UK (mostly from the new EU Accession 8 countries, particularly Poland).</p> <p>. Employers stated that they were often not able to attract older workers because of the pay and conditions offered. Indeed, for many older workers living in rural areas, the low wages and poor conditions offered by rural employers, especially smaller employers, may be a major disincentive for labour market participation</p>
Retention procedures highlighted	N/A

Quality assessment	
Theoretical background (0-3)	1
Methodology (0-3)	2-3
Data analysis (0-3)	2
Contribution to knowledge (0-3)	1-2
Limitations and future research (0-3)	0
Reviewer's decision	
Inclusion/exclusion	Exclusion after reading full paper
Reason for exclusion	This paper has been excluded due to relevance in answering RQ1. While the paper looked at the population aging in a particular area it did not address how employers could best attract the workforce (older workers) that are now forming the pool of potential employees. The paper suggested that employers were willing to employ older workers but were unable to attract this group of people. The authors provided no suggestion on methods of attracting older workers.
Other comments	The paper was initially included based on the abstract that mentioned the need for employers to set strategies to attract older workers in the area but upon a full read of the paper it was apparent that the focus was on the changes occurring to the population rather than how this growing population could be attracted.